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**Stump et al.**

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(54) **INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION SMART  
OBJECT PARENT/CHILD DATA  
COLLECTION PROPAGATION**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An industrial integrated development environment (IDE) provides a development framework for designing, programming, and configuring multiple aspects of an industrial automation system using a common design environment and data model. Projects created using embodiments of the IDE system can be built on an object-based model rather than, or in addition to, a tag-based architecture. To this end, the IDE system can support the use of automation objects that serve as building blocks for this object-based development structure. These automation objects represent corresponding physical industrial assets and have associated programmatic attributes relating to those assets, including data logging and device configuration parameters. Functional relationships between automation objects can be defined to yield object hierarchies, and object attributes can be propagated across objects up and down the hierarchy.

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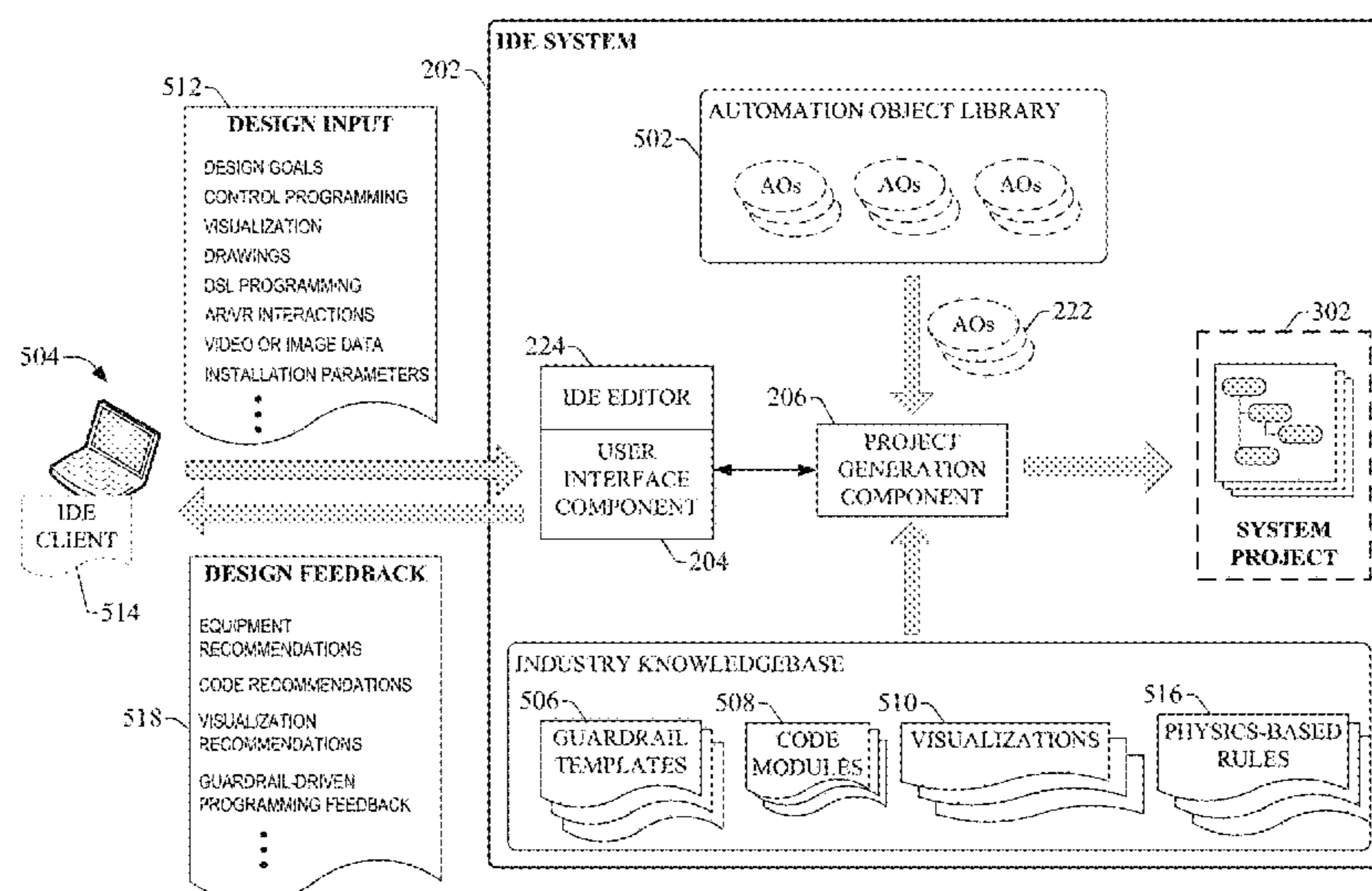
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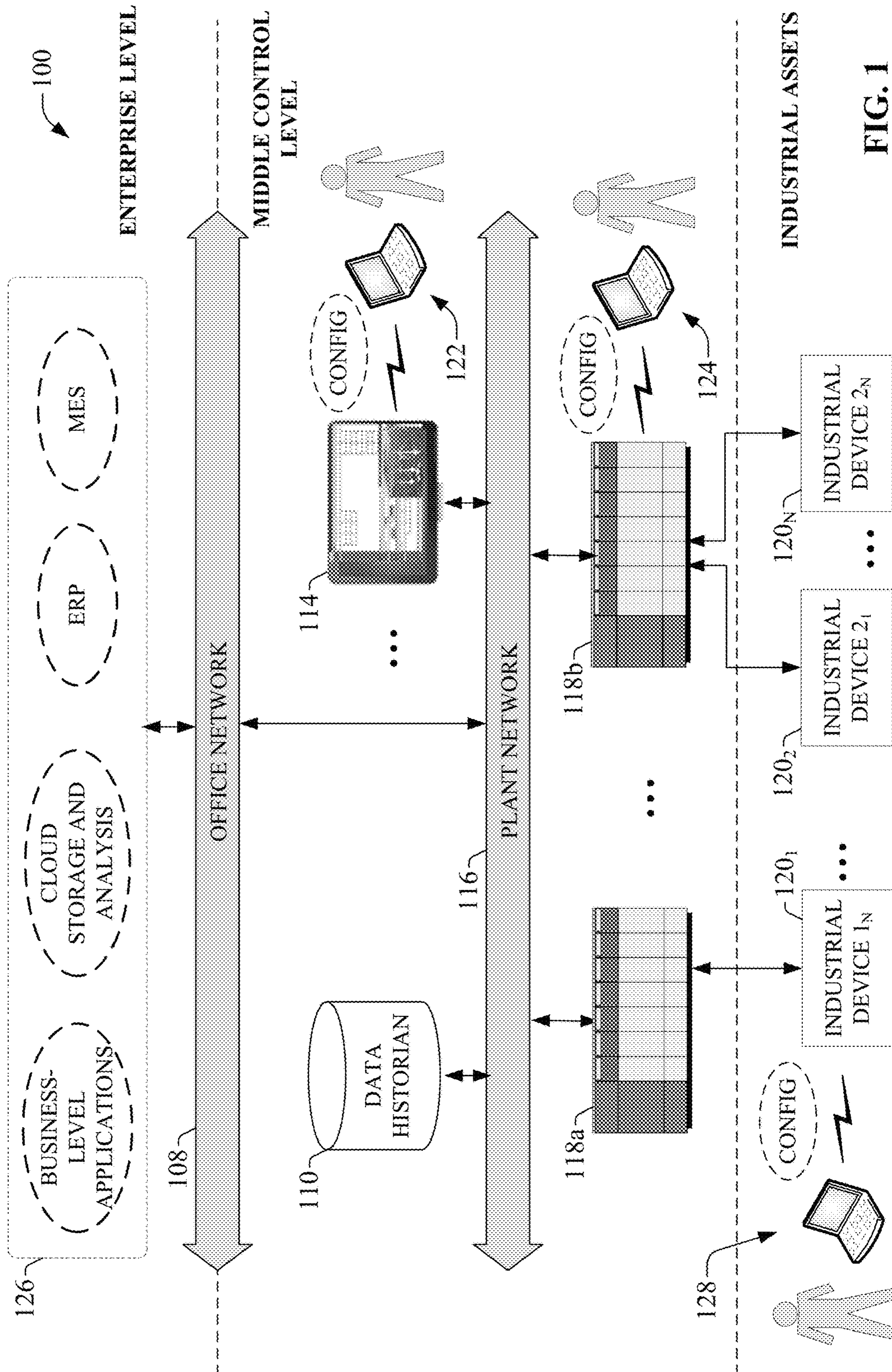


FIG. 1

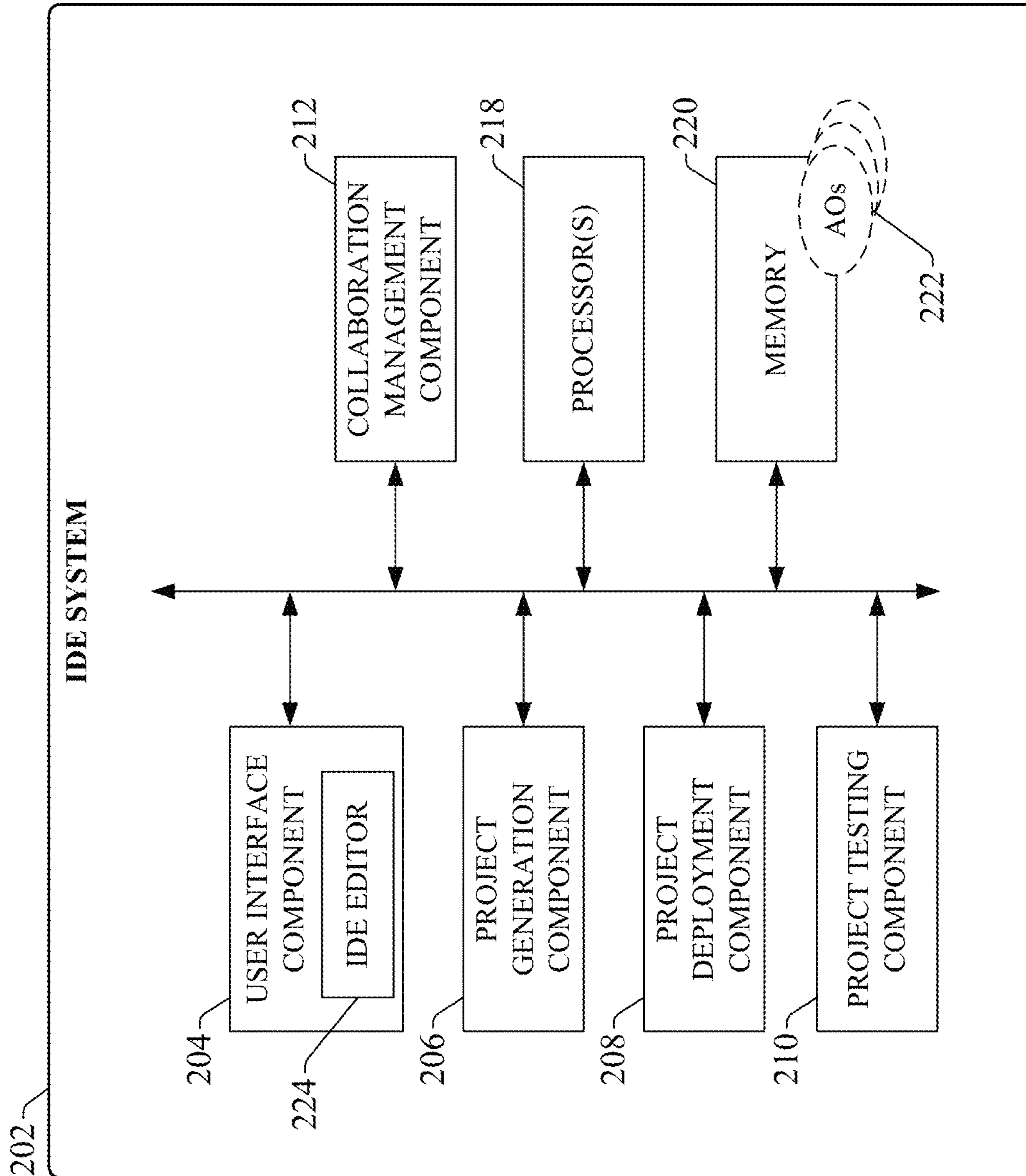


FIG. 2



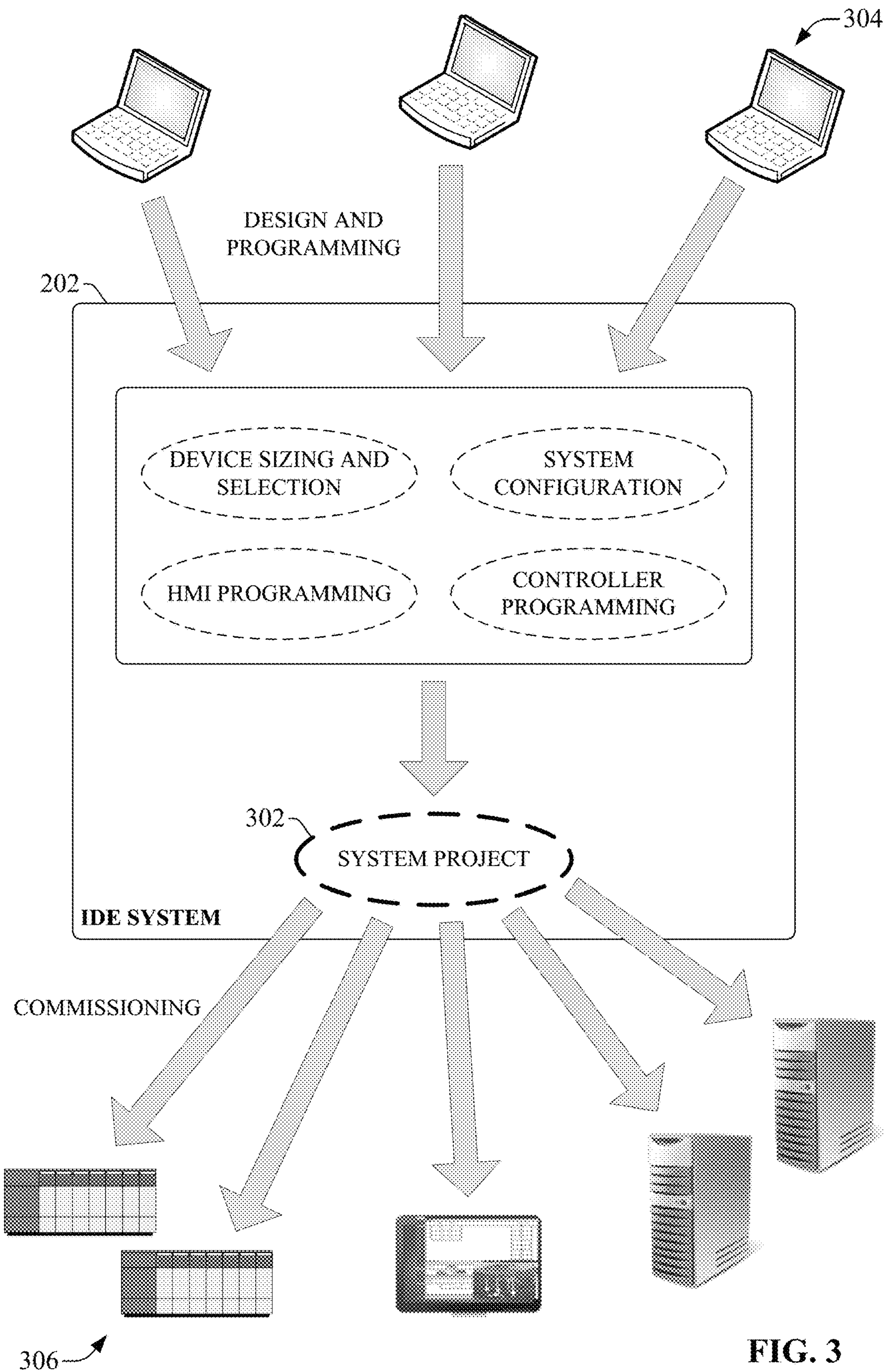


FIG. 3

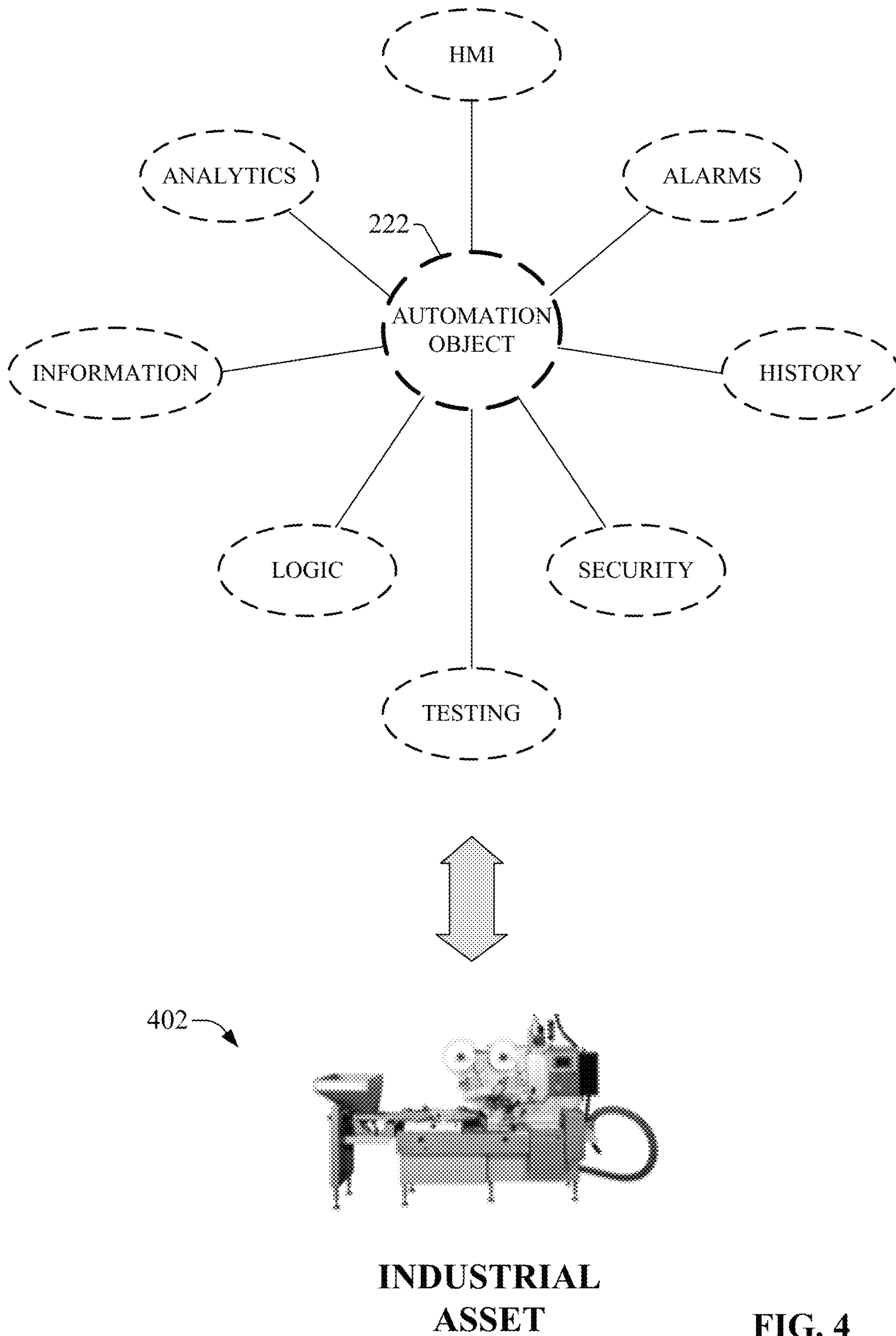


FIG. 4



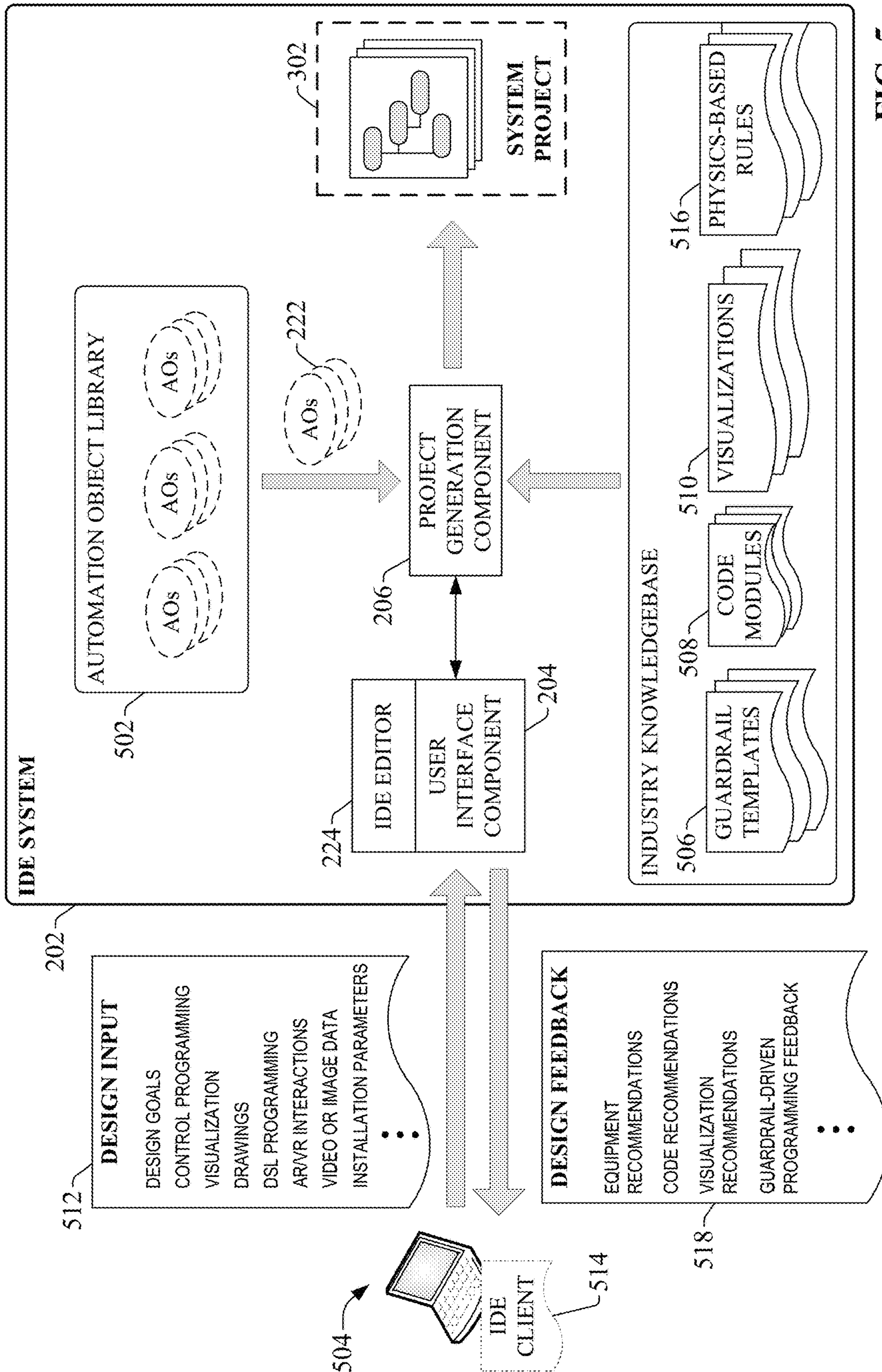


FIG. 5

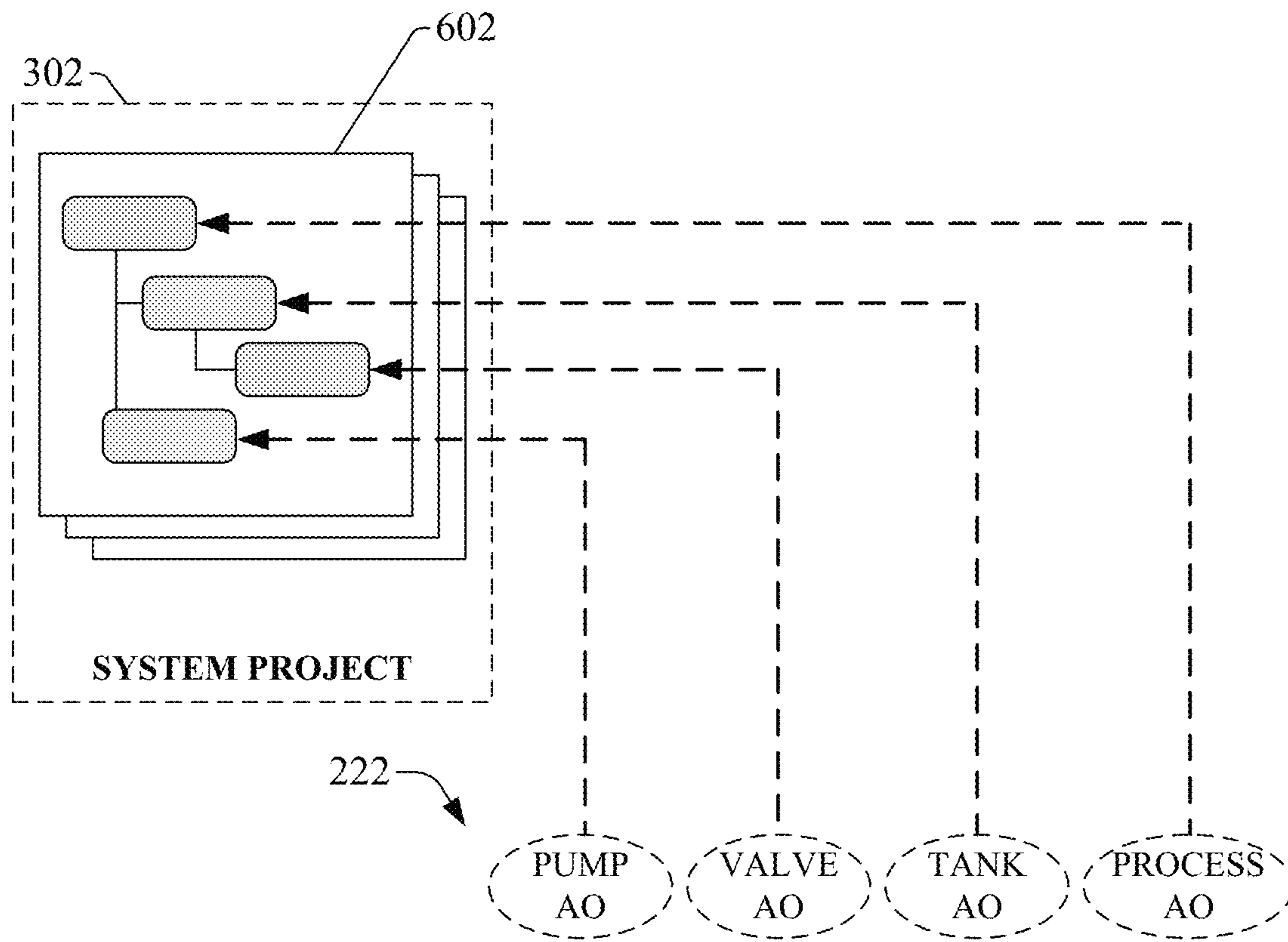


FIG. 6



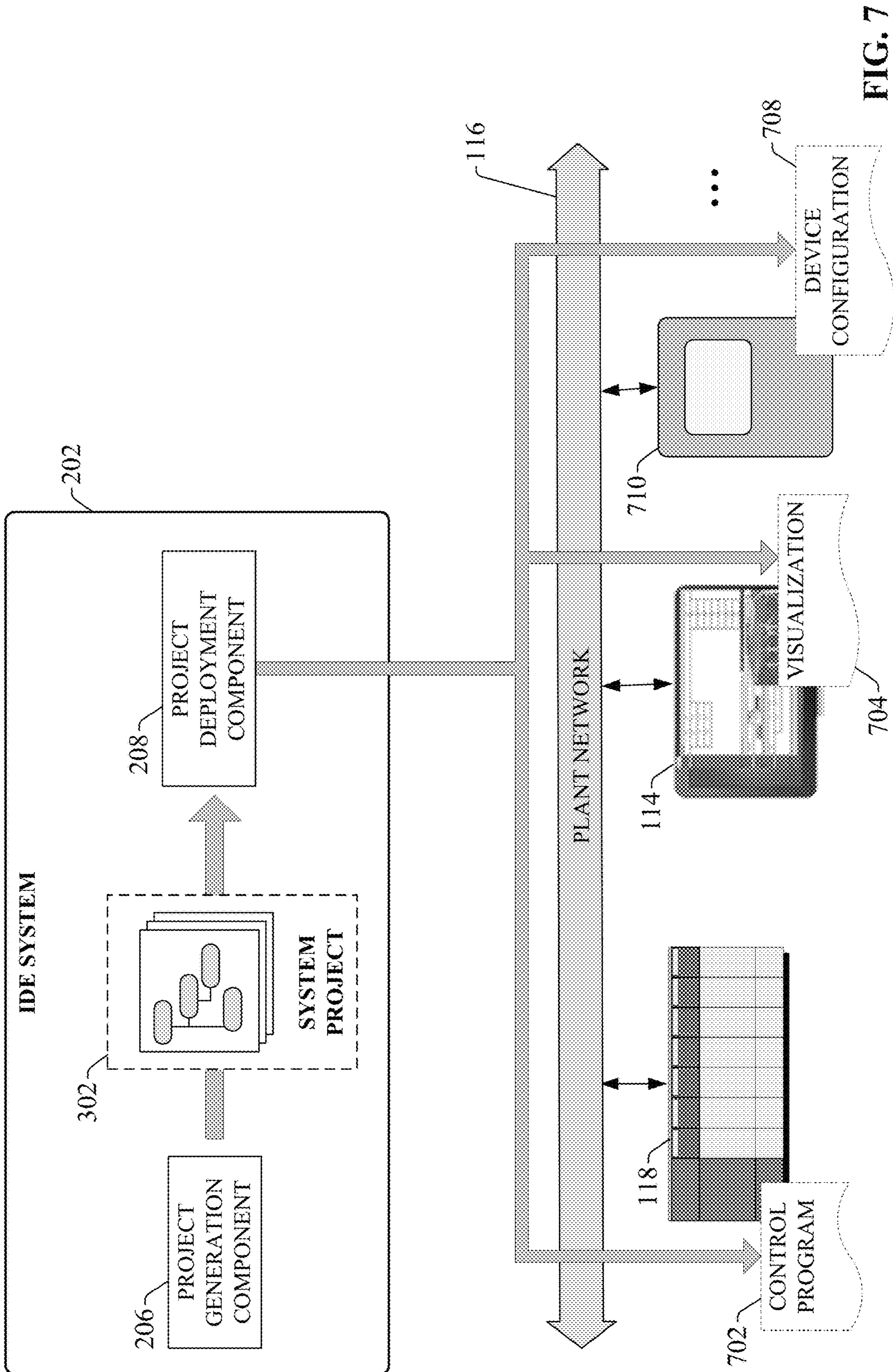


FIG. 7

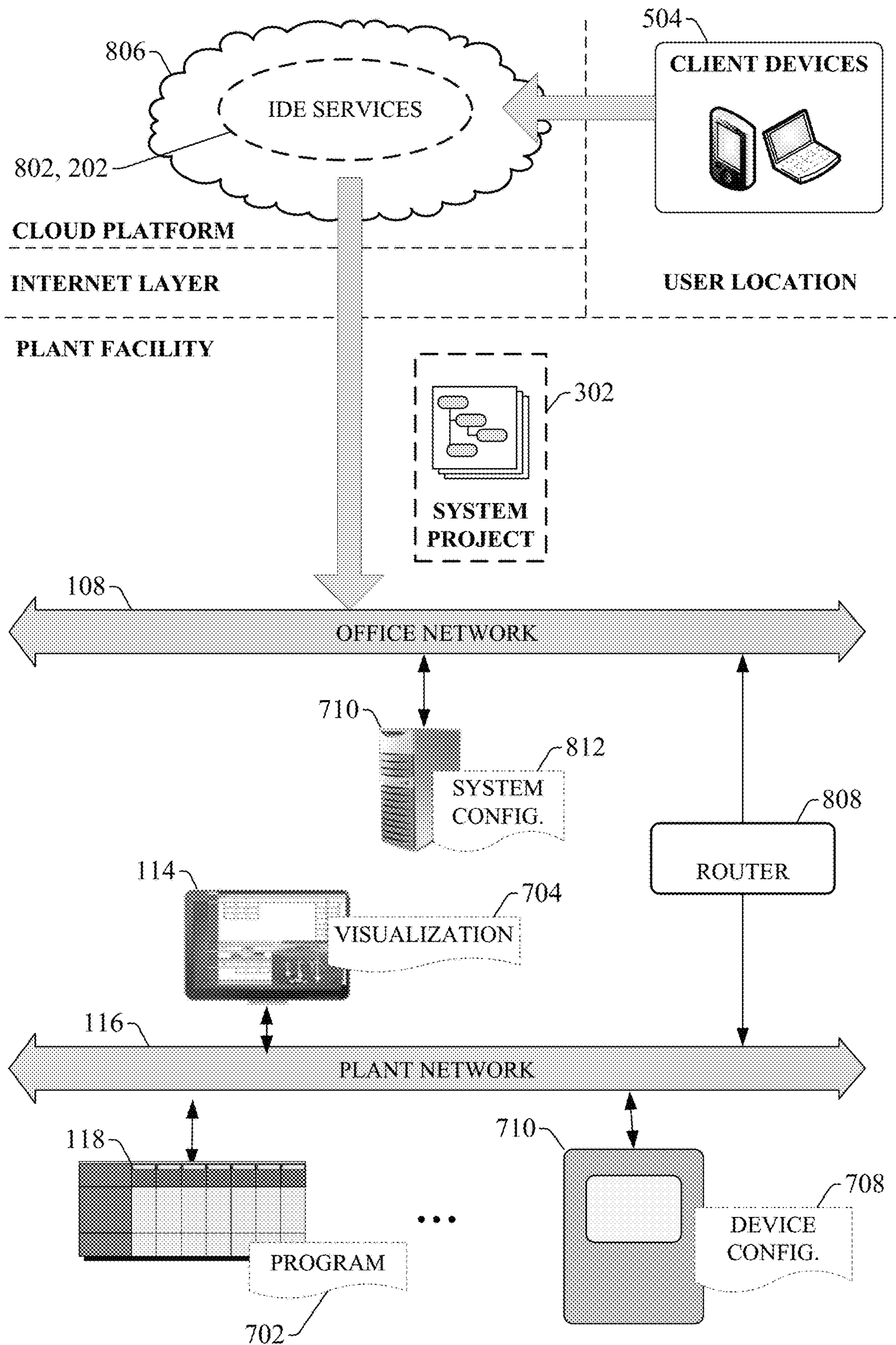


FIG. 8



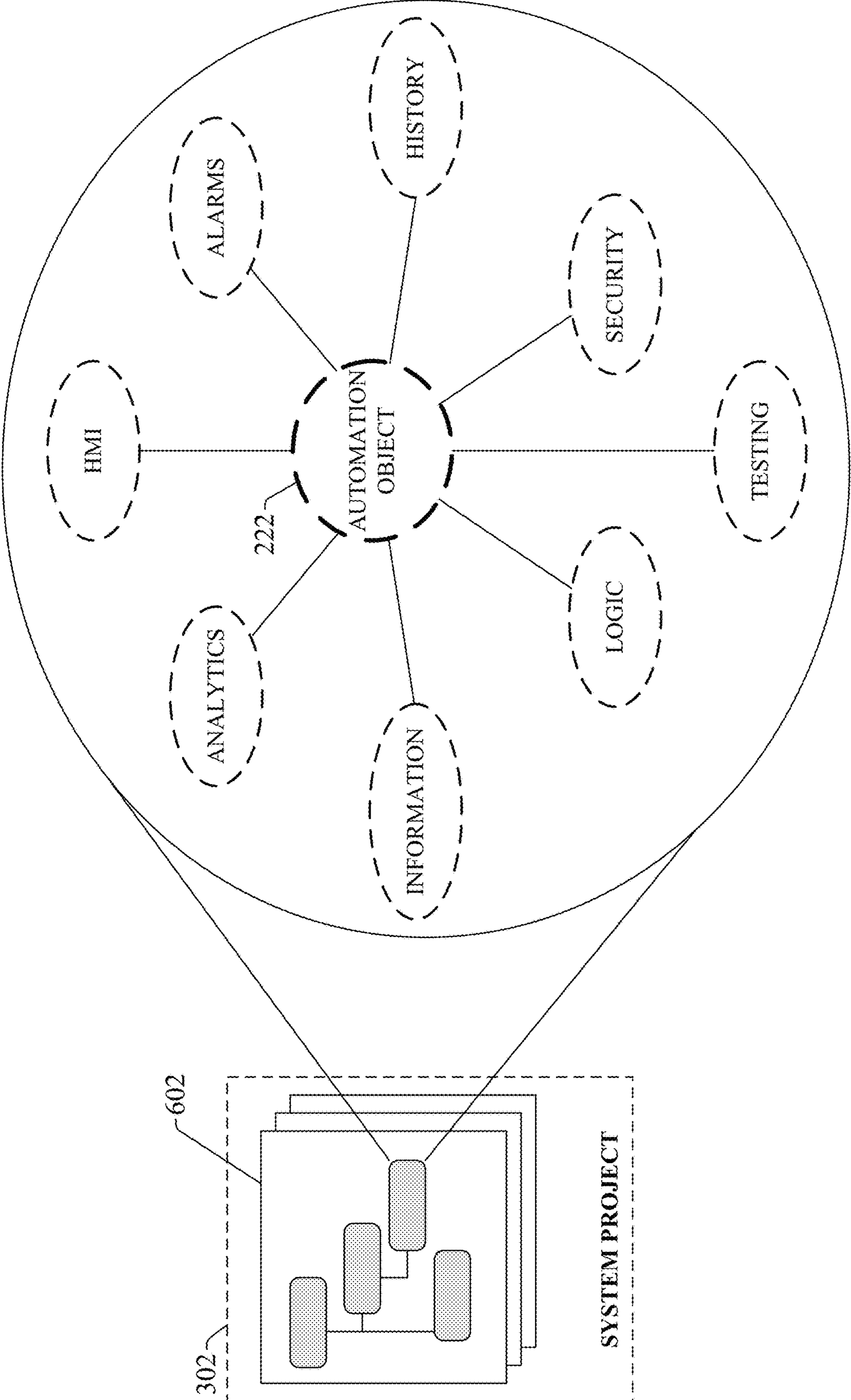


FIG. 9

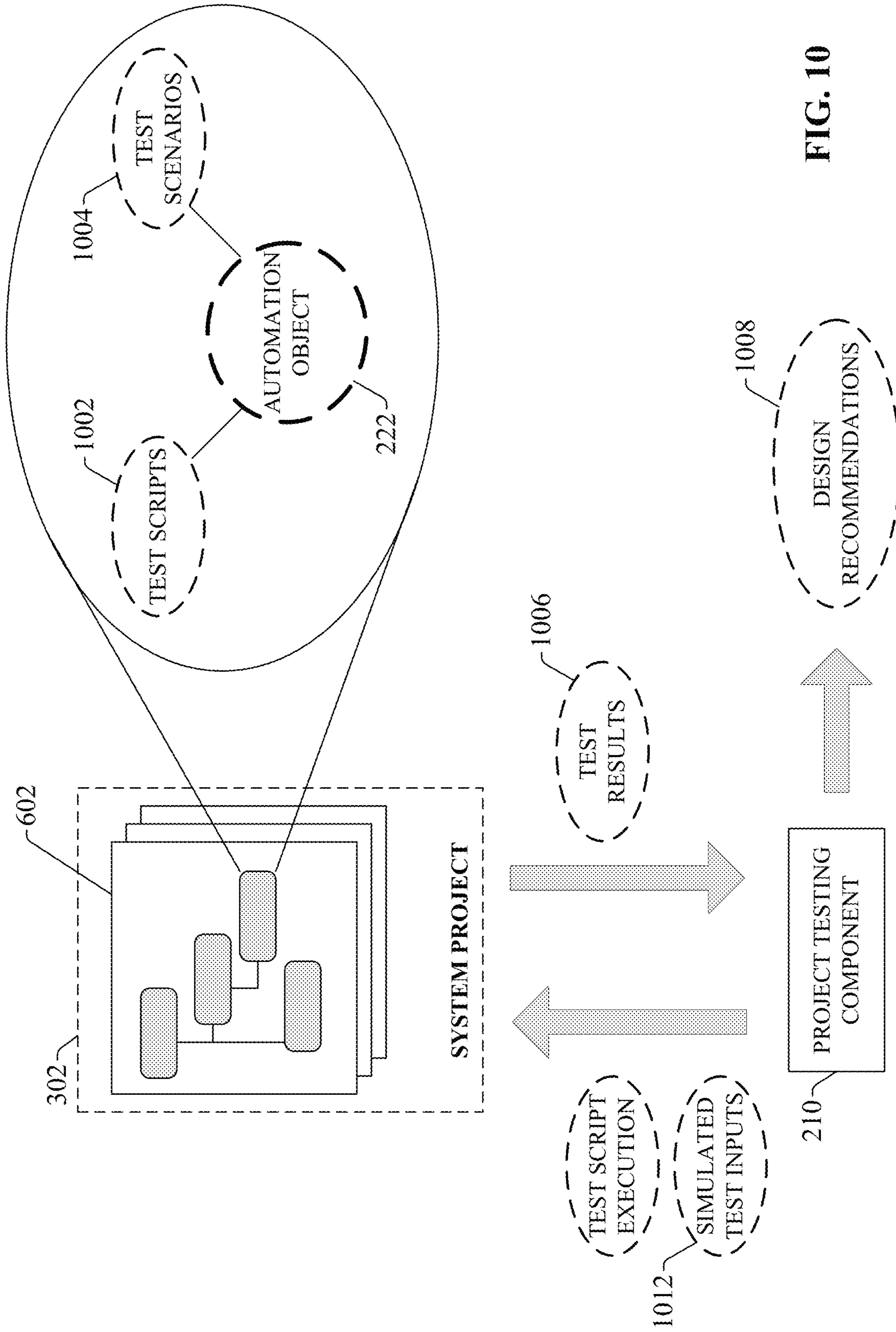


FIG. 10



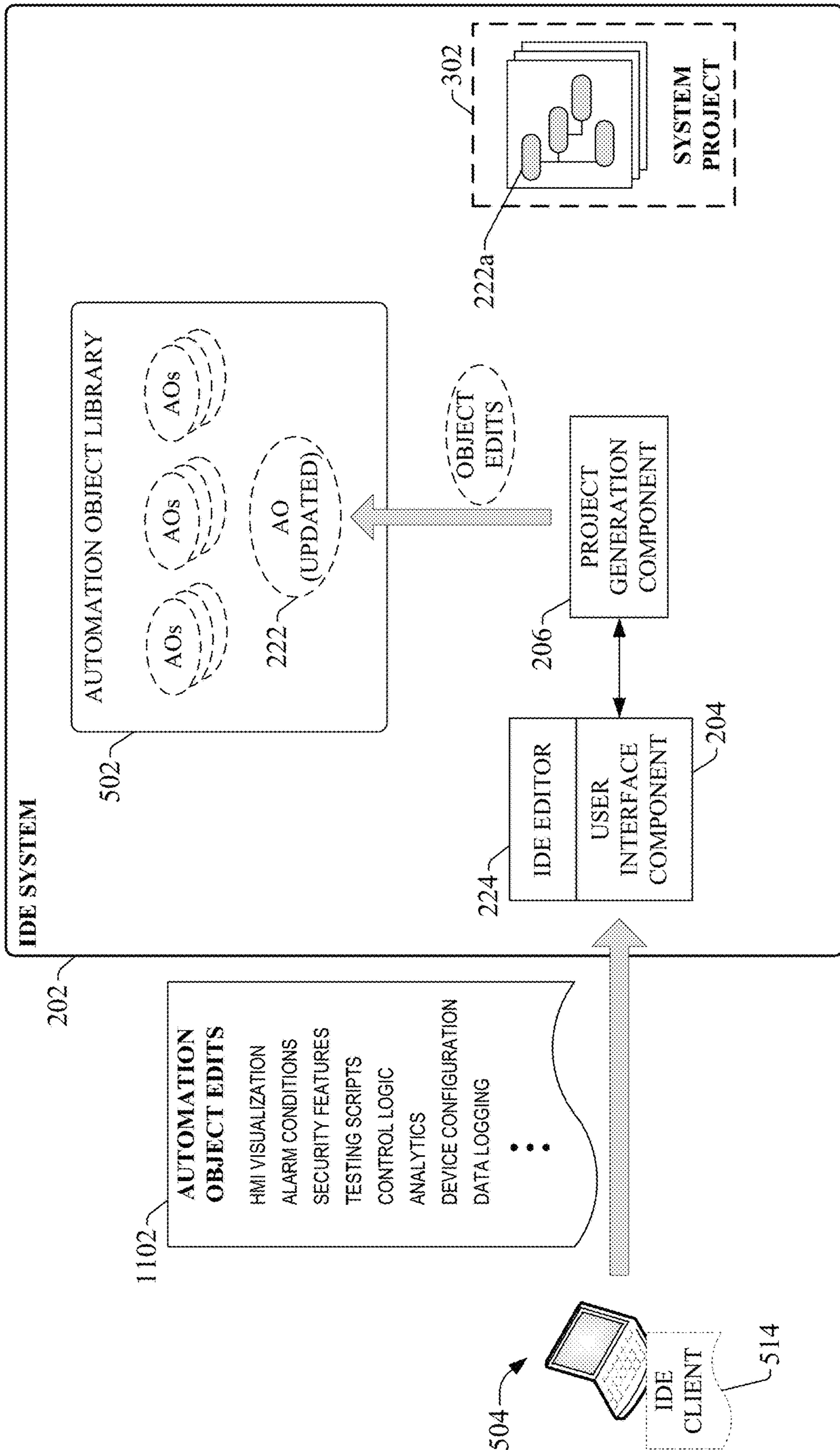


FIG. 11

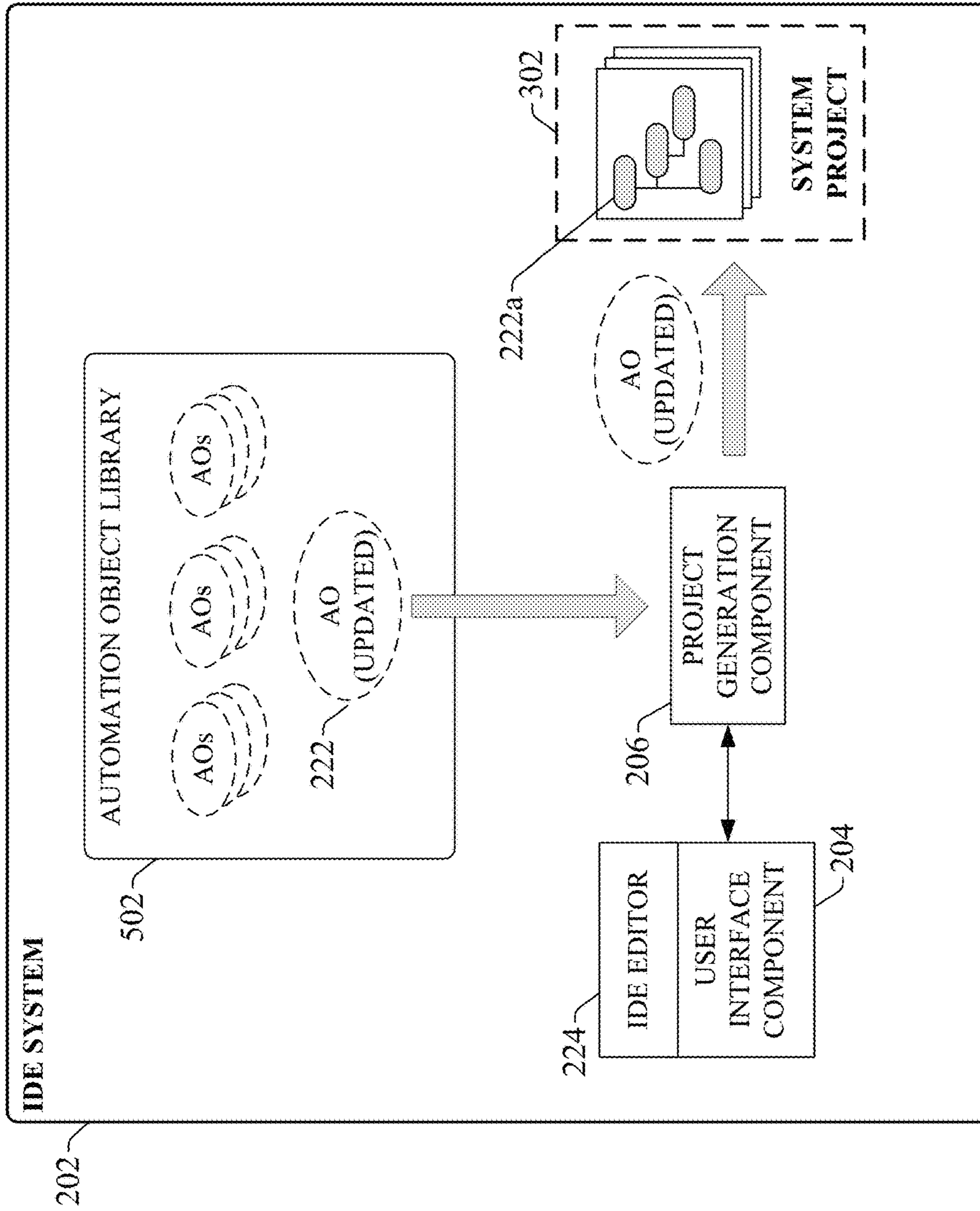


FIG. 12



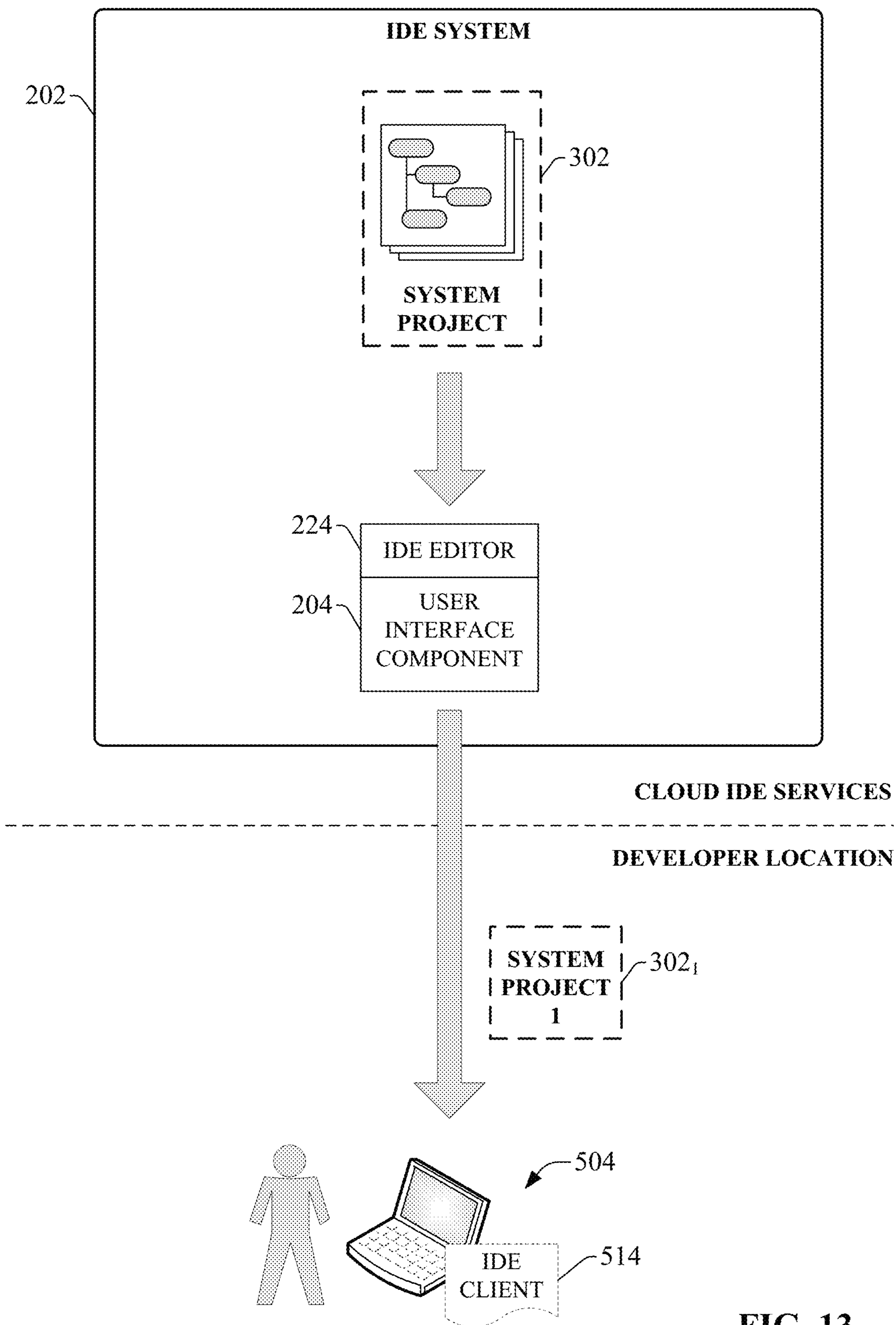


FIG. 13

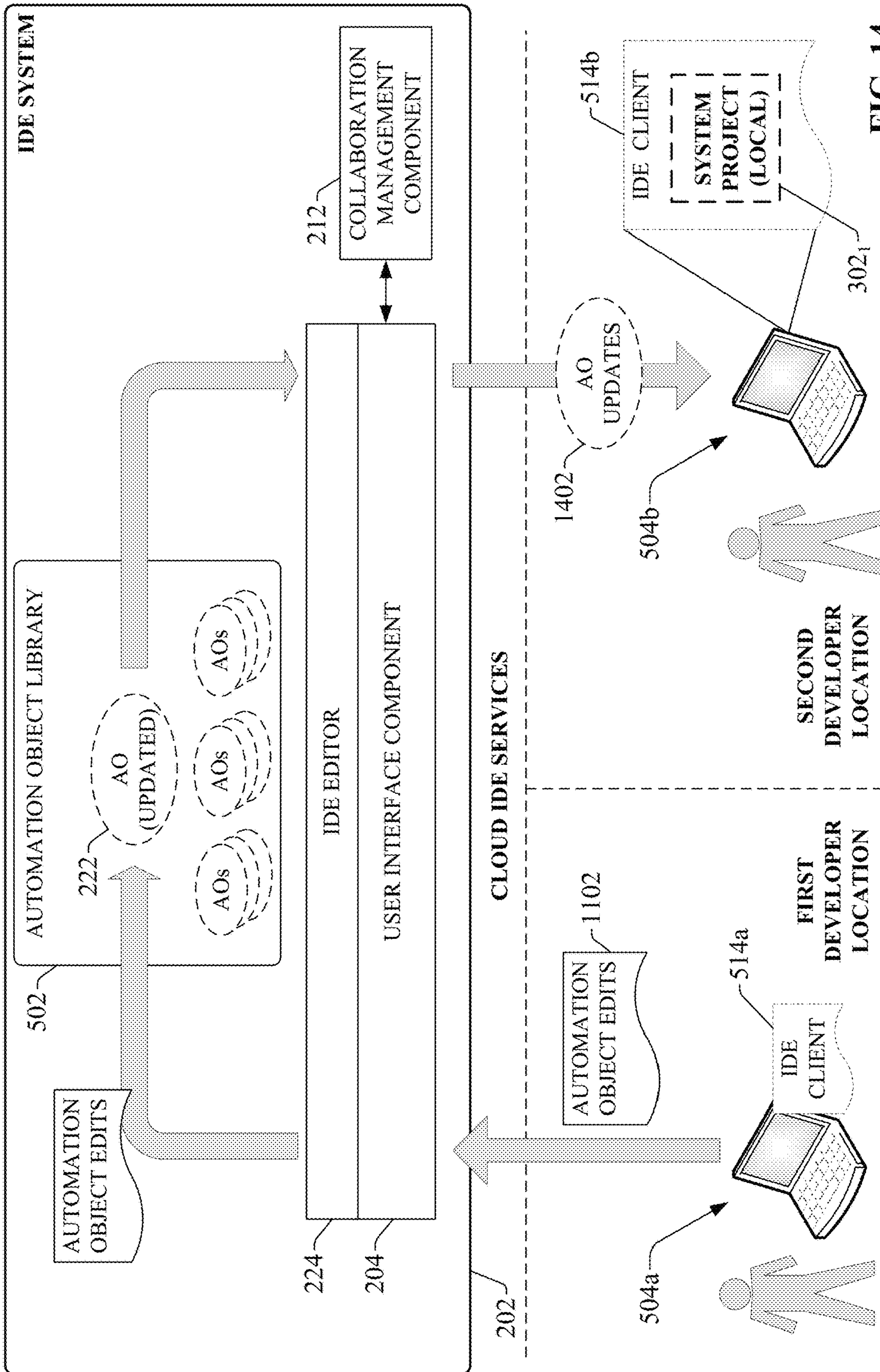


FIG. 14



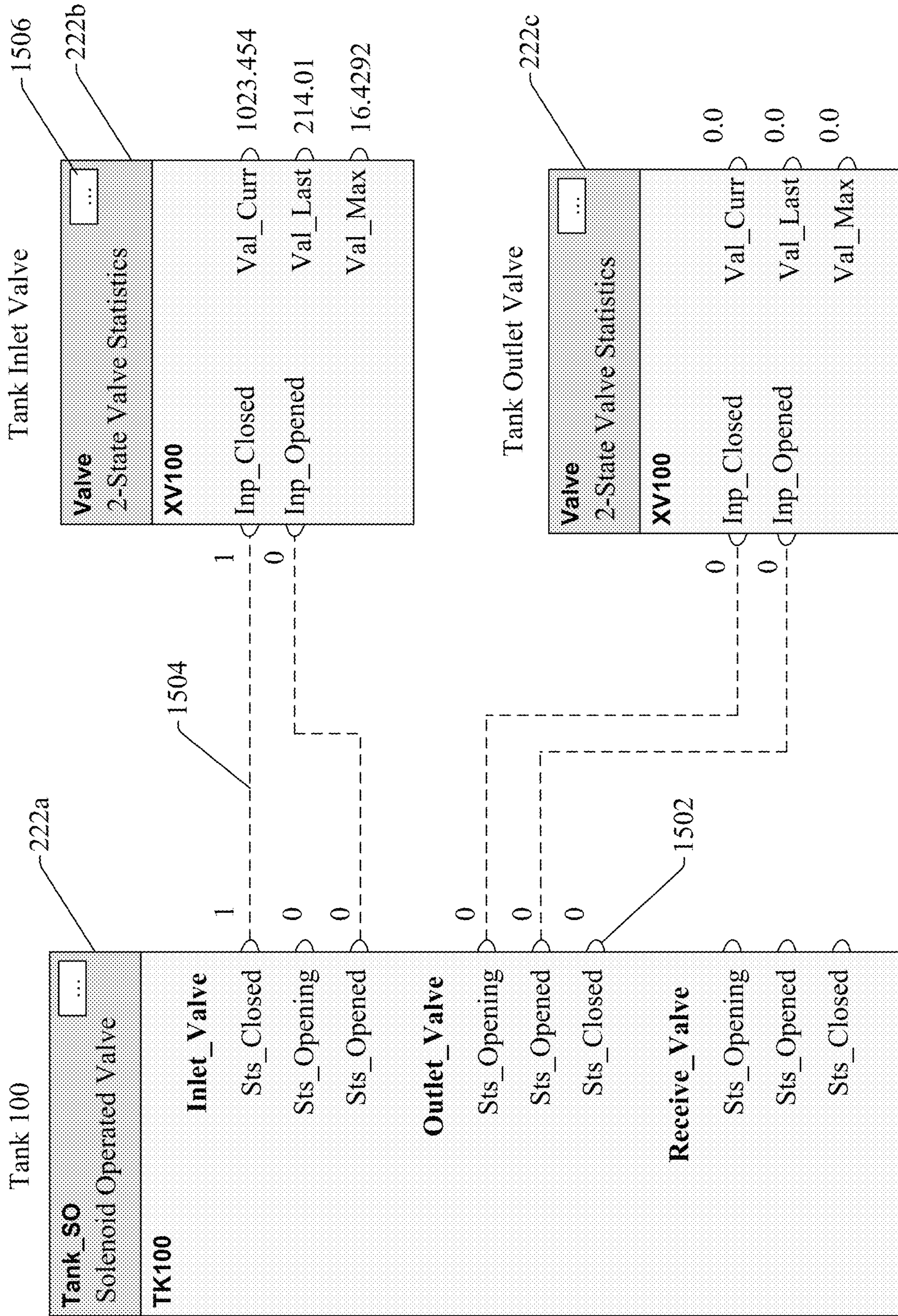


FIG. 15



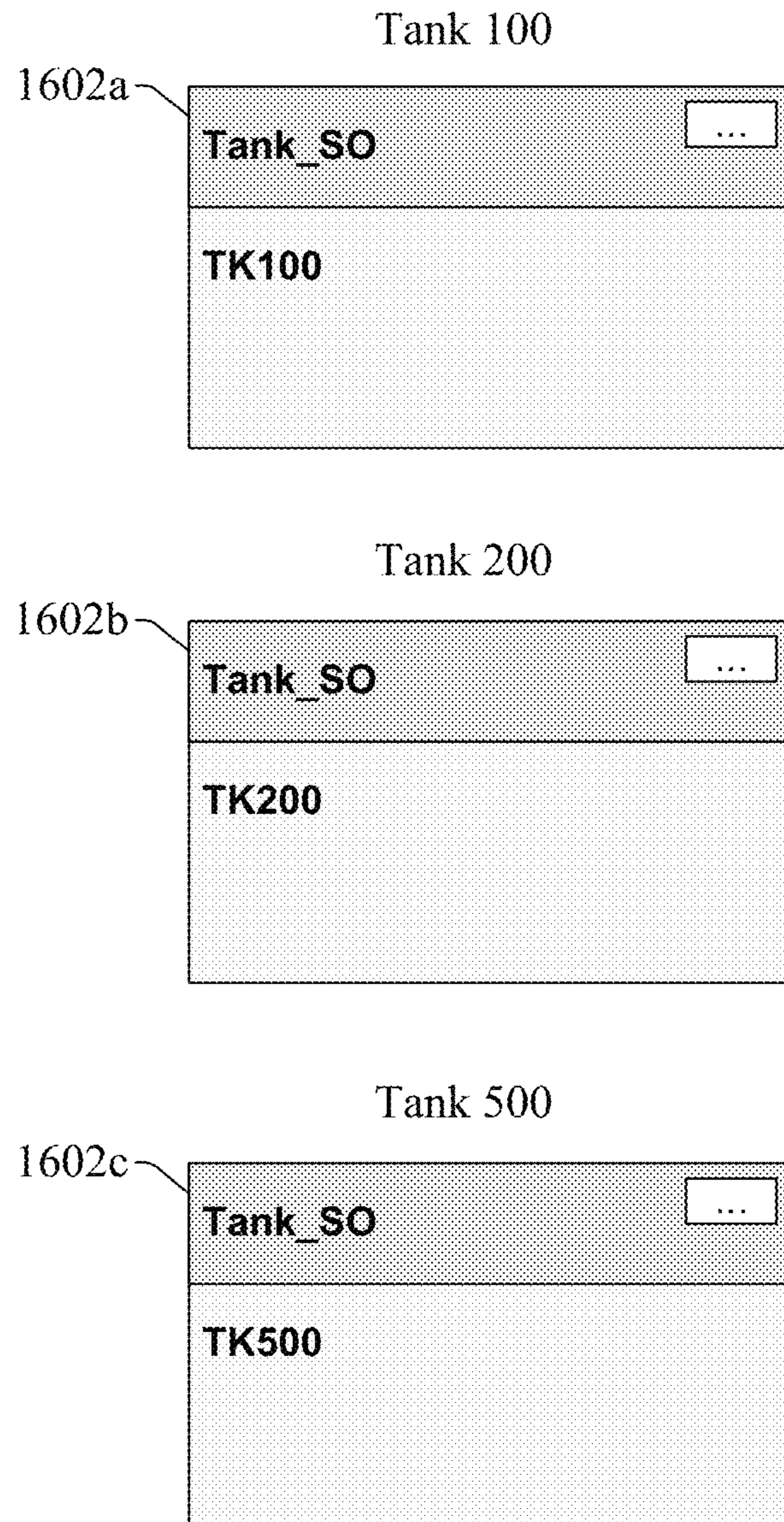


FIG. 16

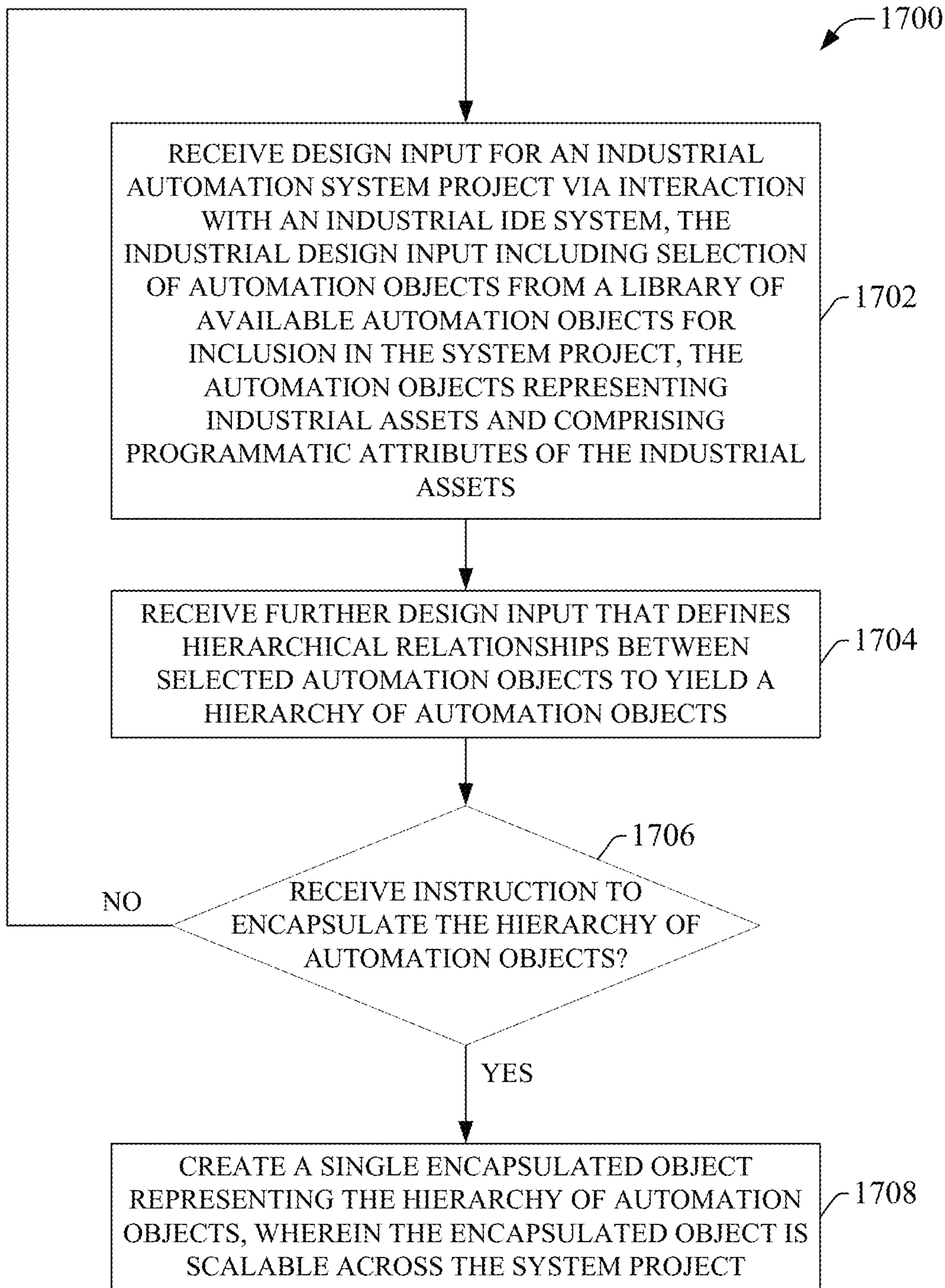


FIG. 17

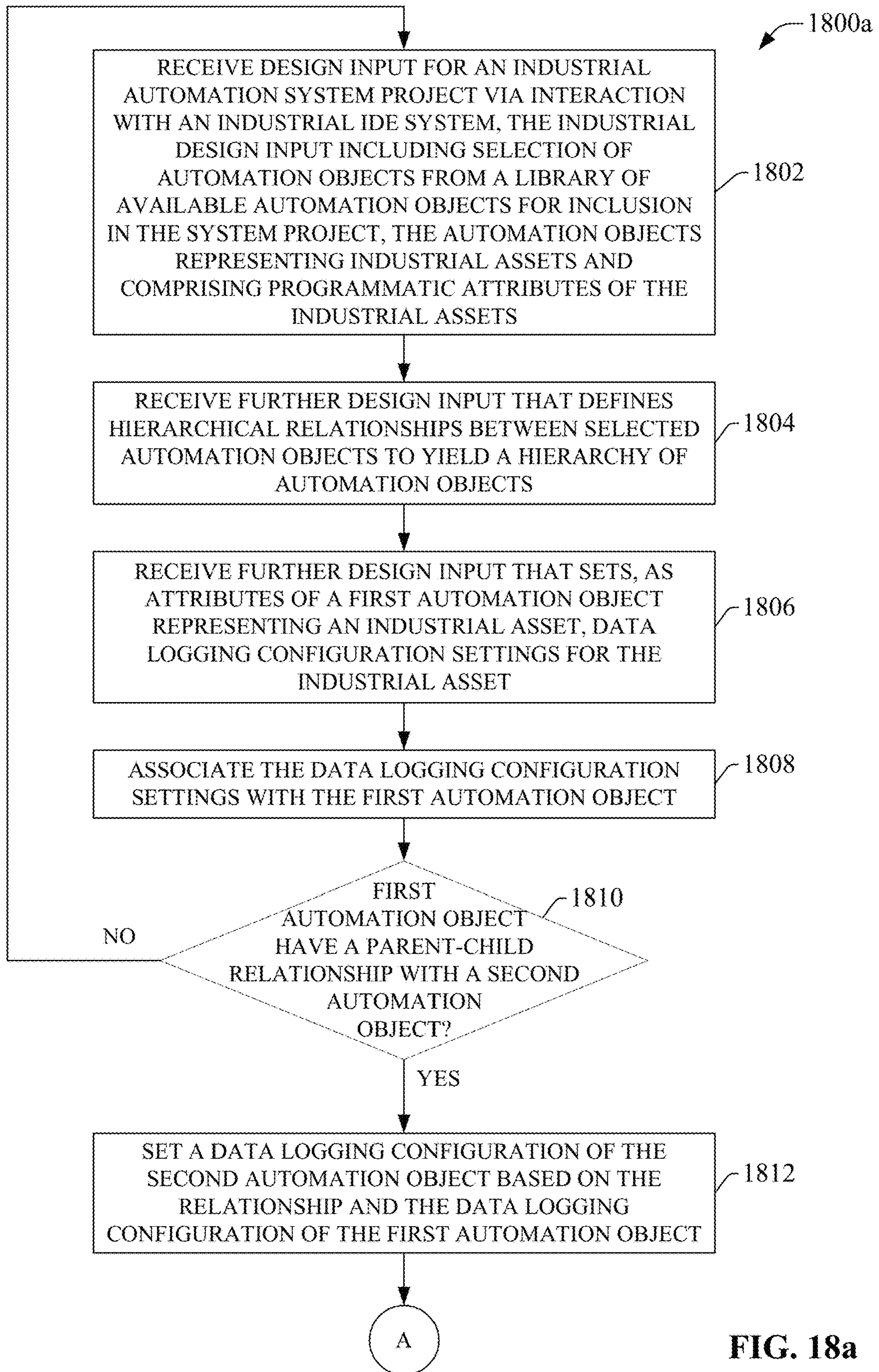


FIG. 18a



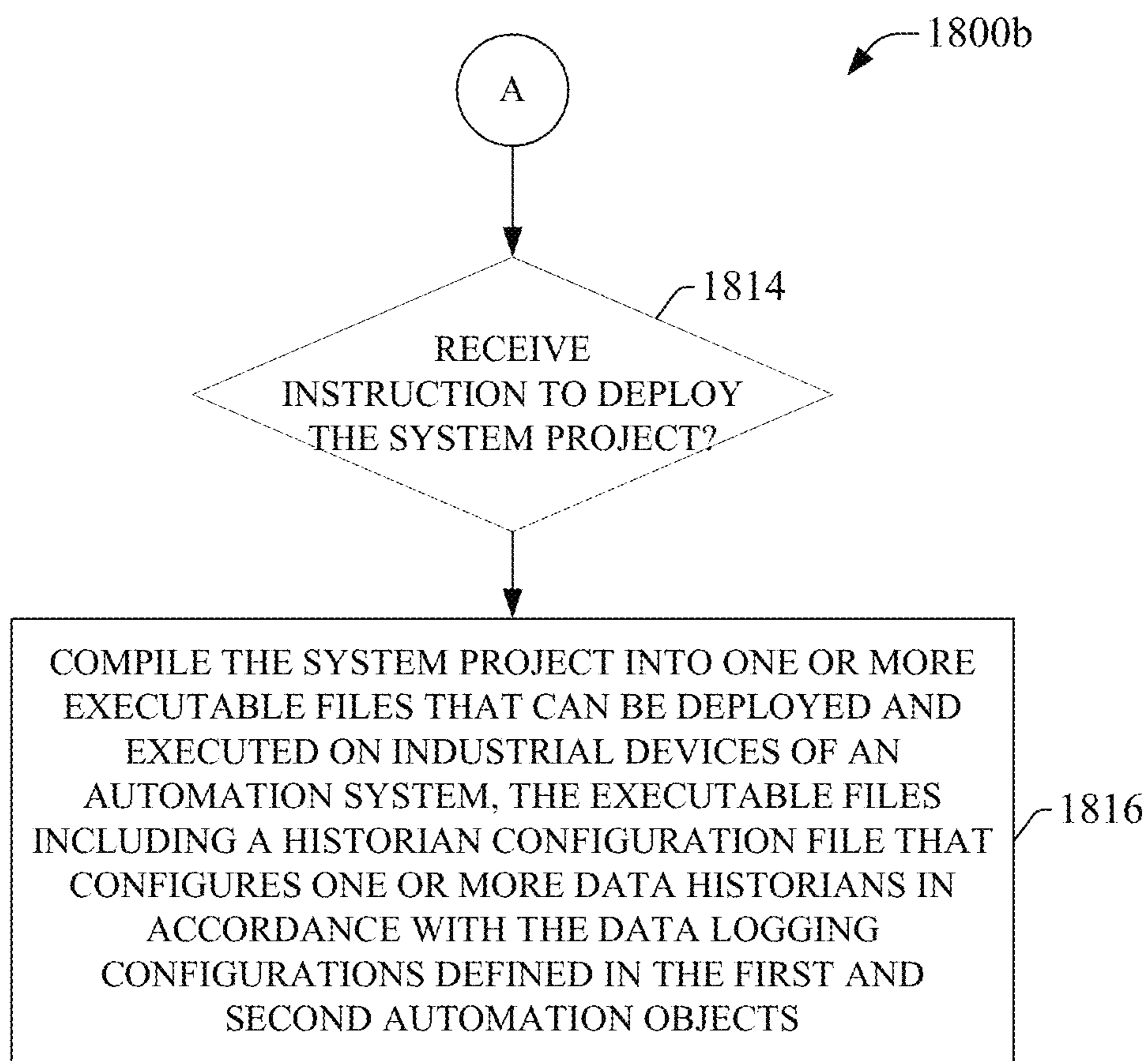


FIG. 18b

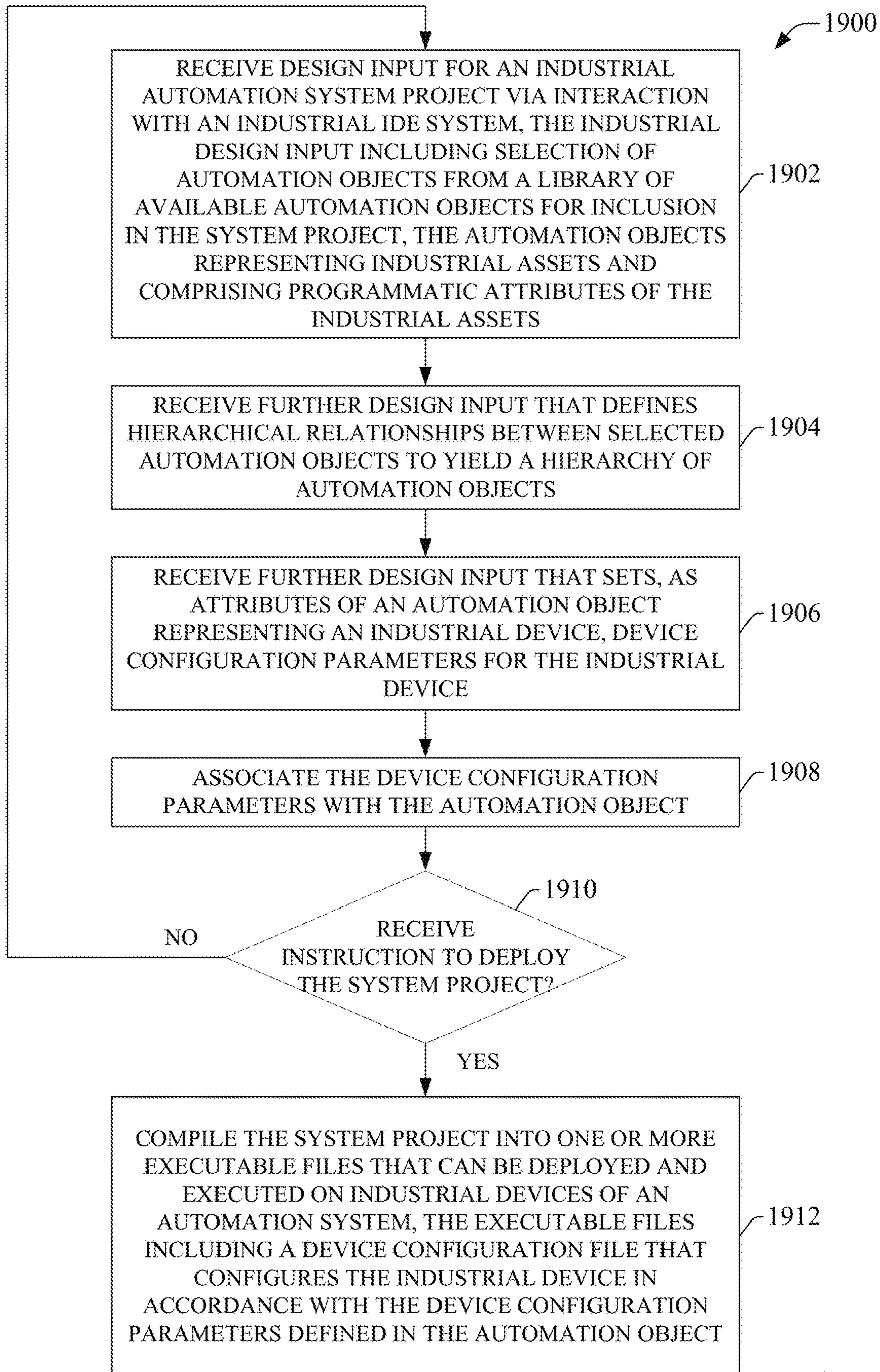


FIG. 19

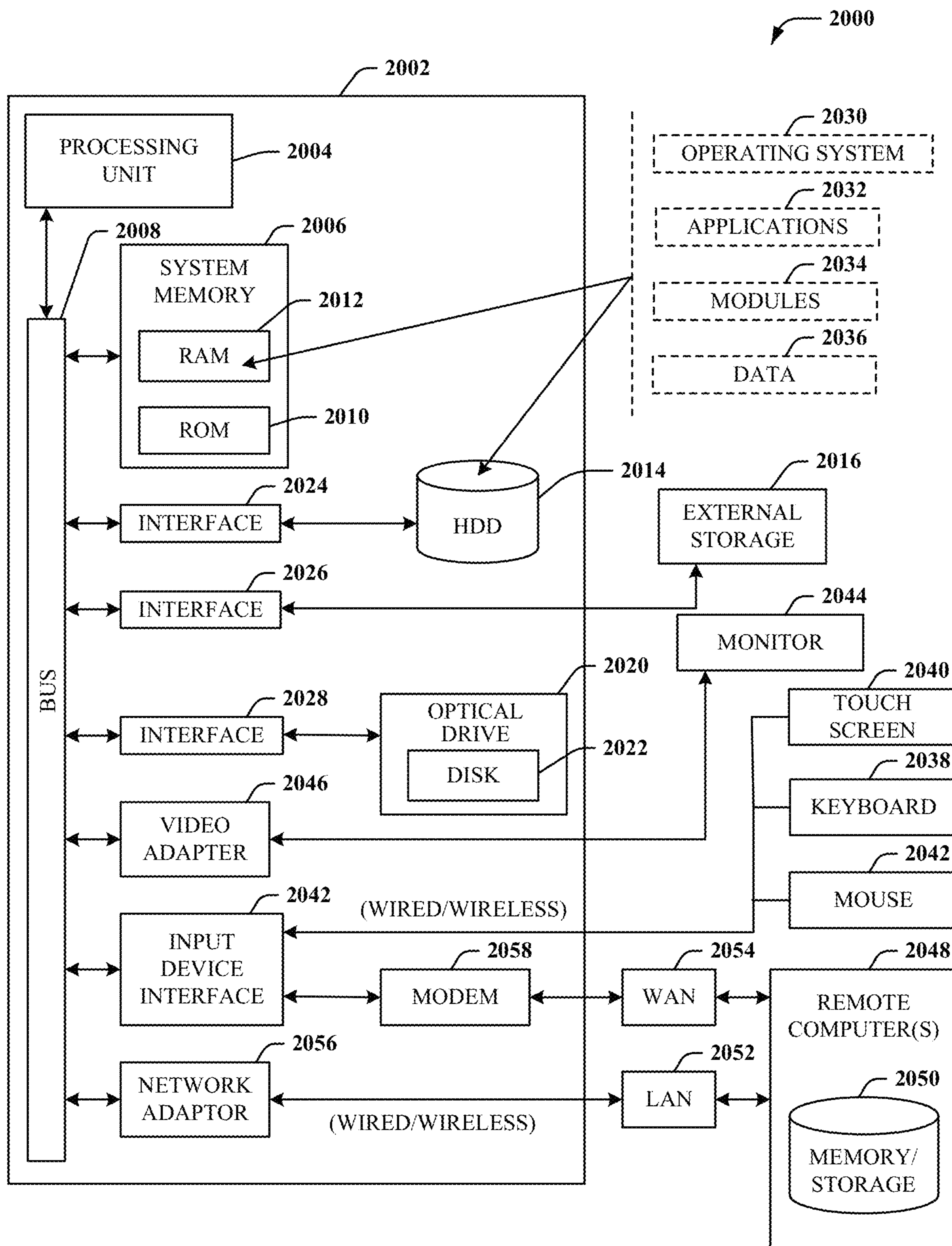


FIG. 20



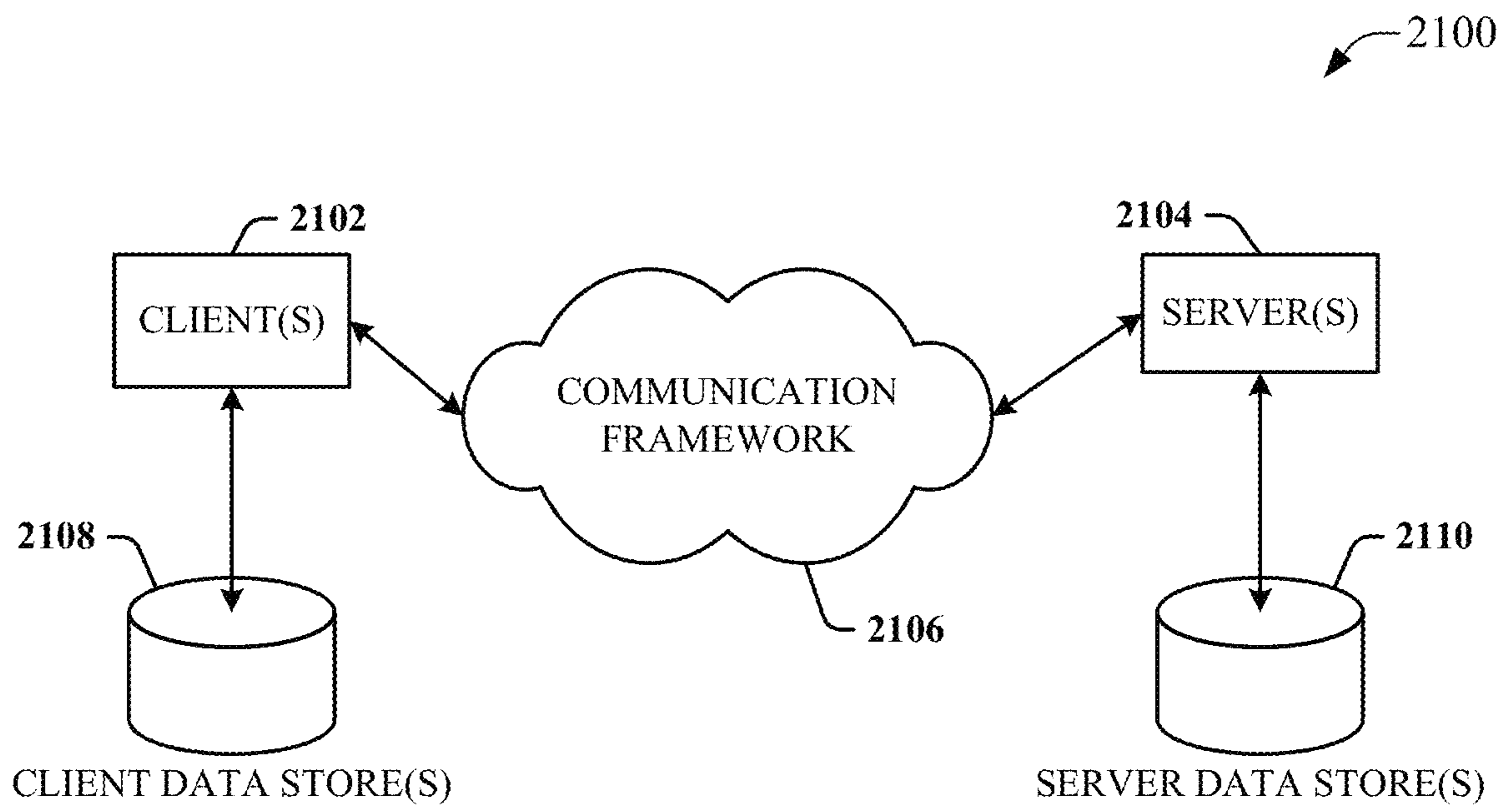


FIG. 21

1

**INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION SMART  
OBJECT PARENT/CHILD DATA  
COLLECTION PROPAGATION**

BACKGROUND

The subject matter disclosed herein relates generally to industrial automation systems, and, for example, to industrial programming development platforms.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The following presents a simplified summary in order to provide a basic understanding of some aspects described herein. This summary is not an extensive overview nor is intended to identify key/critical elements or to delineate the scope of the various aspects described herein. Its sole purpose is to present some concepts in a simplified form as a prelude to the more detailed description that is presented later.

In one or more embodiments, a system for developing industrial applications is provided, comprising a memory that stores executable components and a library of automation objects representing respective industrial assets, the automation objects having respective programmatic attributes associated with the industrial assets; a user interface component configured to render integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces and to receive, via interaction with the IDE interfaces, design input that defines aspects of an industrial automation project; and a project generation component configured to generate system project data based on the design input, wherein the system project data defines a system project comprising at least one of an executable industrial control program, an industrial visualization application, or industrial device configuration data, the system project data further comprises an instance of an automation object selected from the automation objects stored in the library, and the instance of the automation object comprises, as one or more of the programmatic attributes, data logging configuration parameters that, in response to deployment to a data collection system, configure the data collection system to collect data generated by an industrial asset represented by the instance of the automation object.

Also, one or more embodiments provide a method for developing industrial applications, comprising rendering, by a system comprising a processor, integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces on a client device; receiving, by the system via interaction with the IDE interfaces, design input that defines aspects of an industrial control and monitoring project; and generating, by the system, system project data based on the design input, the system project data comprising at least an instance of an automation object selected from a library of automation objects representing respective industrial assets and having respective programmatic attributes relating to the industrial assets, wherein the generating comprises generating at least one of an executable industrial control program, an industrial visualization application, or industrial device configuration data, and the instance of the automation object comprises, as one or more of the programmatic attributes, data logging configuration parameters that, in response to deployment to a data historian system, configure the data historian system to collect data generated by an industrial asset represented by the instance of the automation object.

Also, according to one or more embodiments, a non-transitory computer-readable medium is provided having stored thereon instructions that, in response to execution,

2

cause a system to perform operations, the operations comprising rendering integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces on a client device; receiving, from the client device via interaction with the IDE interfaces, design input that defines control design aspects of an industrial automation project; and generating system project data based on the design input, wherein the generating comprises generating at least one of an executable industrial control program, an industrial visualization application, or industrial device configuration data, the system project data comprises an instance of an automation object selected from a library of automation objects, the automation objects representing respective industrial assets and have respective programmatic attributes relating to the industrial assets, and the instance of the automation object comprises, as one or more of the programmatic attributes, data historian configuration settings that, in response to deployment to a data historian system, configure the data historian system to collect data generated by an industrial asset represented by the instance of the automation object.

To the accomplishment of the foregoing and related ends, certain illustrative aspects are described herein in connection with the following description and the annexed drawings. These aspects are indicative of various ways which can be practiced, all of which are intended to be covered herein. Other advantages and novel features may become apparent from the following detailed description when considered in conjunction with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an example industrial control environment.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an example integrated development environment (IDE) system.

FIG. 3 is a diagram illustrating a generalized architecture of an industrial IDE system.

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating several example automation object properties that can be leveraged by an industrial IDE system in connection with building, deploying, and executing a system project.

FIG. 5 is a diagram illustrating example data flows associated with creation of a system project for an automation system being designed using an industrial IDE system.

FIG. 6 is a diagram illustrating an example system project that incorporates automation objects into a project model.

FIG. 7 is a diagram illustrating commissioning of a system project.

FIG. 8 is a diagram illustrating an example architecture in which cloud-based IDE services are used to develop and deploy industrial applications to a plant environment.

FIG. 9 is an illustration of an example automation object that has been integrated into the project data model of a system project.

FIG. 10 is a diagram illustrating testing of an example system project by an IDE system's project testing component using test scripts bundled with an automation object.

FIG. 11 is a diagram illustrating submission of automation object edits to an IDE system.

FIG. 12 is a diagram illustrating modification of instances of an automation object in accordance with edits submitted to the master version of the automation object stored in a library.

FIG. 13 is a diagram illustrating downloading of a copy of a system project from an industrial IDE system to a local client device.



FIG. 14 is a diagram illustrating propagation of automation object edits to a locally stored copy of a system project.

FIG. 15 is a graphical representation of a two-tier relationship hierarchy between automation objects.

FIG. 16 is an example graphical representation of three encapsulated automation objects.

FIG. 17 is a flowchart of an example methodology for creating and encapsulating a hierarchy of automation objects within an industrial system project using an industrial IDE system.

FIG. 18a is a flowchart of a first part of an example methodology for configuring, within an automation system project, logging of data generated by an automation system to be monitored and controlled by the system project.

FIG. 18b is a flowchart of a second part of the example methodology for configuring, within an automation system project, logging of data generated by an automation system to be monitored and controlled by the system project.

FIG. 19 is a flowchart of an example methodology for defining industrial device configuration within an automation system project using automation objects.

FIG. 20 is an example computing environment.

FIG. 21 is an example networking environment.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The subject disclosure is now described with reference to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals are used to refer to like elements throughout. In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding thereof. It may be evident, however, that the subject disclosure can be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well-known structures and devices are shown in block diagram form in order to facilitate a description thereof.

As used in this application, the terms “component,” “system,” “platform,” “layer,” “controller,” “terminal,” “station,” “node,” “interface” are intended to refer to a computer-related entity or an entity related to, or that is part of, an operational apparatus with one or more specific functionalities, wherein such entities can be either hardware, a combination of hardware and software, software, or software in execution. For example, a component can be, but is not limited to being, a process running on a processor, a processor, a hard disk drive, multiple storage drives (of optical or magnetic storage medium) including affixed (e.g., screwed or bolted) or removable affixed solid-state storage drives; an object; an executable; a thread of execution; a computer-executable program, and/or a computer. By way of illustration, both an application running on a server and the server can be a component. One or more components can reside within a process and/or thread of execution, and a component can be localized on one computer and/or distributed between two or more computers. Also, components as described herein can execute from various computer readable storage media having various data structures stored thereon. The components may communicate via local and/or remote processes such as in accordance with a signal having one or more data packets (e.g., data from one component interacting with another component in a local system, distributed system, and/or across a network such as the Internet with other systems via the signal). As another example, a component can be an apparatus with specific functionality provided by mechanical parts operated by electric or electronic circuitry which is operated by a software or a firmware application executed by a processor, wherein the

processor can be internal or external to the apparatus and executes at least a part of the software or firmware application. As yet another example, a component can be an apparatus that provides specific functionality through electronic components without mechanical parts, the electronic components can include a processor therein to execute software or firmware that provides at least in part the functionality of the electronic components. As further yet another example, interface(s) can include input/output (I/O) components as well as associated processor, application, or Application Programming Interface (API) components. While the foregoing examples are directed to aspects of a component, the exemplified aspects or features also apply to a system, platform, interface, layer, controller, terminal, and the like.

As used herein, the terms “to infer” and “inference” refer generally to the process of reasoning about or inferring states of the system, environment, and/or user from a set of observations as captured via events and/or data. Inference can be employed to identify a specific context or action, or can generate a probability distribution over states, for example. The inference can be probabilistic—that is, the computation of a probability distribution over states of interest based on a consideration of data and events. Inference can also refer to techniques employed for composing higher-level events from a set of events and/or data. Such inference results in the construction of new events or actions from a set of observed events and/or stored event data, whether or not the events are correlated in close temporal proximity, and whether the events and data come from one or several event and data sources.

In addition, the term “or” is intended to mean an inclusive “or” rather than an exclusive “or.” That is, unless specified otherwise, or clear from the context, the phrase “X employs A or B” is intended to mean any of the natural inclusive permutations. That is, the phrase “X employs A or B” is satisfied by any of the following instances: X employs A; X employs B; or X employs both A and B. In addition, the articles “a” and “an” as used in this application and the appended claims should generally be construed to mean “one or more” unless specified otherwise or clear from the context to be directed to a singular form.

Furthermore, the term “set” as employed herein excludes the empty set; e.g., the set with no elements therein. Thus, a “set” in the subject disclosure includes one or more elements or entities. As an illustration, a set of controllers includes one or more controllers; a set of data resources includes one or more data resources; etc. Likewise, the term “group” as utilized herein refers to a collection of one or more entities; e.g., a group of nodes refers to one or more nodes.

Various aspects or features will be presented in terms of systems that may include a number of devices, components, modules, and the like. It is to be understood and appreciated that the various systems may include additional devices, components, modules, etc. and/or may not include all of the devices, components, modules etc. discussed in connection with the figures. A combination of these approaches also can be used.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an example industrial control environment 100. In this example, a number of industrial controllers 118 are deployed throughout an industrial plant environment to monitor and control respective industrial systems or processes relating to product manufacture, machining, motion control, batch processing, material handling, or other such industrial functions. Industrial controllers 118 typically execute respective control programs to



facilitate monitoring and control of industrial devices **120** making up the controlled industrial assets or systems (e.g., industrial machines). One or more industrial controllers **118** may also comprise a soft controller executed on a personal computer or other hardware platform, or on a cloud platform. Some hybrid devices may also combine controller functionality with other functions (e.g., visualization). The control programs executed by industrial controllers **118** can comprise substantially any type of code capable of processing input signals read from the industrial devices **120** and controlling output signals generated by the industrial controllers **118**, including but not limited to ladder logic, sequential function charts, function block diagrams, or structured text.

Industrial devices **120** may include both input devices that provide data relating to the controlled industrial systems to the industrial controllers **118**, and output devices that respond to control signals generated by the industrial controllers **118** to control aspects of the industrial systems. Example input devices can include telemetry devices (e.g., temperature sensors, flow meters, level sensors, pressure sensors, etc.), manual operator control devices (e.g., push buttons, selector switches, etc.), safety monitoring devices (e.g., safety mats, safety pull cords, light curtains, etc.), and other such devices. Output devices may include motor drives, pneumatic actuators, signaling devices, robot control inputs, valves, pumps, and the like.

Industrial controllers **118** may communicatively interface with industrial devices **120** over hardwired or networked connections. For example, industrial controllers **118** can be equipped with native hardwired inputs and outputs that communicate with the industrial devices **120** to effect control of the devices. The native controller I/O can include digital I/O that transmits and receives discrete voltage signals to and from the field devices, or analog I/O that transmits and receives analog voltage or current signals to and from the devices. The controller I/O can communicate with a controller's processor over a backplane such that the digital and analog signals can be read into and controlled by the control programs. Industrial controllers **118** can also communicate with industrial devices **120** over a network using, for example, a communication module or an integrated networking port. Exemplary networks can include the Internet, intranets, Ethernet, DeviceNet, ControlNet, Data Highway and Data Highway Plus (DH/DH+), Remote I/O, Fieldbus, Modbus, Profibus, wireless networks, serial protocols, and the like. The industrial controllers **118** can also store persisted data values that can be referenced by their associated control programs and used for control decisions, including but not limited to measured or calculated values representing operational states of a controlled machine or process (e.g., tank levels, positions, alarms, etc.) or captured time series data that is collected during operation of the automation system (e.g., status information for multiple points in time, diagnostic occurrences, etc.). Similarly, some intelligent devices—including but not limited to motor drives, instruments, or condition monitoring modules—may store data values that are used for control and/or to visualize states of operation. Such devices may also capture time-series data or events on a log for later retrieval and viewing.

Industrial automation systems often include one or more human-machine interfaces (HMIs) **114** that allow plant personnel to view telemetry and status data associated with the automation systems, and to control some aspects of system operation. HMIs **114** may communicate with one or more of the industrial controllers **118** over a plant network **116**, and exchange data with the industrial controllers to

facilitate visualization of information relating to the controlled industrial processes on one or more pre-developed operator interface screens. HMIs **114** can also be configured to allow operators to submit data to specified data tags or memory addresses of the industrial controllers **118**, thereby providing a means for operators to issue commands to the controlled systems (e.g., cycle start commands, device actuation commands, etc.), to modify setpoint values, etc. HMIs **114** can generate one or more display screens through which the operator interacts with the industrial controllers **118**, and thereby with the controlled processes and/or systems. Example display screens can visualize present states of industrial systems or their associated devices using graphical representations of the processes that display metered or calculated values, employ color or position animations based on state, render alarm notifications, or employ other such techniques for presenting relevant data to the operator. Data presented in this manner is read from industrial controllers **118** by HMIs **114** and presented on one or more of the display screens according to display formats chosen by the HMI developer. HMIs may comprise fixed location or mobile devices with either user-installed or pre-installed operating systems, and either user-installed or pre-installed graphical application software.

Some industrial environments may also include other systems or devices relating to specific aspects of the controlled industrial systems. These may include, for example, a data historian **110** that aggregates and stores production information collected from the industrial controllers **118** or other data sources, device documentation stores containing electronic documentation for the various industrial devices making up the controlled industrial systems, inventory tracking systems, work order management systems, repositories for machine or process drawings and documentation, vendor product documentation storage, vendor knowledgebases, internal knowledgebases, work scheduling applications, or other such systems, some or all of which may reside on an office network **108** of the industrial environment.

Higher-level systems **126** may carry out functions that are less directly related to control of the industrial automation systems on the plant floor, and instead are directed to long term planning, high-level supervisory control, analytics, reporting, or other such high-level functions. These systems **126** may reside on the office network **108** at an external location relative to the plant facility, or on a cloud platform with access to the office and/or plant networks. Higher-level systems **126** may include, but are not limited to, cloud storage and analysis systems, big data analysis systems, manufacturing execution systems, data lakes, reporting systems, etc. In some scenarios, applications running at these higher levels of the enterprise may be configured to analyze control system operational data, and the results of this analysis may be fed back to an operator at the control system or directly to a controller **118** or device **120** in the control system.

The various control, monitoring, and analytical devices that make up an industrial environment must be programmed or configured using respective configuration applications specific to each device. For example, industrial controllers **118** are typically configured and programmed using a control programming development application such as a ladder logic editor (e.g., executing on a client device **124**). Using such development platforms, a designer can write control programming (e.g., ladder logic, structured text, function block diagrams, etc.) for carrying out a desired industrial sequence or process and download the resulting program files to the controller **118**. Separately, developers



design visualization screens and associated navigation structures for HMIs 114 using an HMI development platform (e.g., executing on client device 122) and download the resulting visualization files to the HMI 114. Some industrial devices 120—such as motor drives, telemetry devices, safety input devices, etc.—may also require configuration using separate device configuration tools (e.g., executing on client device 128) that are specific to the device being configured. Such device configuration tools may be used to set device parameters or operating modes (e.g., high/low limits, output signal formats, scale factors, energy consumption modes, etc.).

The necessity of using separate configuration tools to program and configure disparate aspects of an industrial automation system results in a piecemeal design approach whereby different but related or overlapping aspects of an automation system are designed, configured, and programmed separately on different development environments. For example, a motion control system may require an industrial controller to be programmed and a control loop to be tuned using a control logic programming platform, a motor drive to be configured using another configuration platform, and an associated HMI to be programmed using a visualization development platform. Related peripheral systems—such as vision systems, safety systems, etc.—may also require configuration using separate programming or development applications.

This segregated development approach can also necessitate considerable testing and debugging efforts to ensure proper integration of the separately configured system aspects. In this regard, intended data interfacing or coordinated actions between the different system aspects may require significant debugging due to a failure to properly coordinate disparate programming efforts.

To address at least some of these or other issues, one or more embodiments described herein provide an integrated development environment (IDE) for designing, programming, and configuring multiple aspects of an industrial automation system using a common design environment and data model. Embodiments of the industrial IDE can be used to configure and manage automation system devices in a common way, facilitating integrated, multi-discipline programming of control, visualization, and other aspects of the control system.

In general, the industrial IDE supports features that span the full automation lifecycle, including design (e.g., device selection and sizing, controller programming, visualization development, device configuration, testing, etc.); installation, configuration and commissioning; operation, improvement, and administration; and troubleshooting, expanding, and upgrading.

Embodiments of the industrial IDE can include a library of modular code and visualizations that are specific to industry verticals and common industrial applications within those verticals. These code and visualization modules can simplify development and shorten the development cycle, while also supporting consistency and reuse across an industrial enterprise.

To support enhance development capabilities, projects creating using embodiments of the IDE system can be built on an object-based model rather than, or in addition to, a tag-based architecture. To this end, the IDE system can support the use of automation objects that serve as building blocks for this object-based development structure. To ensure consistency within and between projects, as well as to ensure that a given industrial project is dynamically updated to reflect changes to an industrial asset's attributes

(e.g., control code, visualization definitions, testing scripts, analytic code, etc.), embodiments of the IDE system can use automation object inheritance features to propagate changes made to an automation object definition to all instances of the automation object used throughout a control project. Additionally, the IDE system allows a user to define hierarchical linkages between automation objects representing different industrial assets or enterprise levels, and to encapsulate these linked objects into a single object that can be moved to other aspects of the system project, or replicated across multiple projects or project sections. In some embodiments, data logging configurations can also be embedded natively within smart objects. In the case of linked automation objects, data logging configurations can be propagated through the defined object hierarchy such that a parent object controls data logging behaviors of child objects.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an example integrated development environment (IDE) system 202 according to one or more embodiments of this disclosure. Aspects of the systems, apparatuses, or processes explained in this disclosure can constitute machine-executable components embodied within machine(s), e.g., embodied in one or more computer-readable mediums (or media) associated with one or more machines. Such components, when executed by one or more machines, e.g., computer(s), computing device(s), automation device(s), virtual machine(s), etc., can cause the machine(s) to perform the operations described.

IDE system 202 can include a user interface component 204 including an IDE editor 224, a project generation component 206, a project deployment component 208, a project testing component 210, a collaboration management component 212, one or more processors 218, and memory 220. In various embodiments, one or more of the user interface component 204, project generation component 206, project deployment component 208, project testing component 210, collaboration management component 212, the one or more processors 218, and memory 220 can be electrically and/or communicatively coupled to one another to perform one or more of the functions of the IDE system 202. In some embodiments, components 204, 206, 208, 210, and 212 can comprise software instructions stored on memory 220 and executed by processor(s) 218. IDE system 202 may also interact with other hardware and/or software components not depicted in FIG. 2. For example, processor(s) 218 may interact with one or more external user interface devices, such as a keyboard, a mouse, a display monitor, a touchscreen, or other such interface devices.

User interface component 204 can be configured to receive user input and to render output to the user in any suitable format (e.g., visual, audio, tactile, etc.). In some embodiments, user interface component 204 can be configured to communicatively interface with an IDE client that executes on a client device (e.g., a laptop computer, tablet computer, smart phone, etc.) that is communicatively connected to the IDE system 202 (e.g., via a hardwired or wireless connection). The user interface component 204 can then receive user input data and render output data via the IDE client. In other embodiments, user interface component 314 can be configured to generate and serve suitable interface screens to a client device (e.g., program development screens), and exchange data via these interface screens. Input data that can be received via various embodiments of user interface component 204 can include, but is not limited to, programming code, industrial design specifications or goals, engineering drawings, AR/VR input, DSL definitions, video or image data, project testing scripts, or other such input. Output data rendered by various embodiments of user



interface component **204** can include program code, programming feedback (e.g., error and highlighting, coding suggestions, etc.), programming and visualization development screens, project testing results, etc.

Project generation component **206** can be configured to create a system project comprising one or more project files based on design input received via the user interface component **204**, as well as industrial knowledge, predefined code modules and visualizations, and automation objects **222** maintained by the IDE system **202**. Project deployment component **208** can be configured to commission the system project created by the project generation component **206** to appropriate industrial devices (e.g., controllers, HMI terminals, motor drives, AR/VR systems, etc.) for execution. To this end, project deployment component **208** can identify the appropriate target devices to which respective portions of the system project should be sent for execution, translate these respective portions to formats understandable by the target devices, and deploy the translated project components to their corresponding devices.

Project testing component **210** can be configured to execute testing scripts associated with automation objects **222** or other elements of the system project to validate proper execution of various aspects of the project. Collaboration management component **212** can be configured to track instances of a system project that have been downloaded to local client devices so that these local versions of the project can be updated as needed in response to modifications submitted to the cloud-based IDE system.

The one or more processors **218** can perform one or more of the functions described herein with reference to the systems and/or methods disclosed. Memory **220** can be a computer-readable storage medium storing computer-executable instructions and/or information for performing the functions described herein with reference to the systems and/or methods disclosed.

FIG. **3** is a diagram illustrating a generalized architecture of the industrial IDE system **202** according to one or more embodiments. Industrial IDE system **202** can implement a common set of services and workflows spanning not only design, but also commissioning, operation, and maintenance. In terms of design, the IDE system **202** can support not only industrial controller programming and HMI development, but also sizing and selection of system components, device/system configuration, AR/VR visualizations, and other features. The IDE system **202** can also include tools that simplify and automate commissioning of the resulting project and assist with subsequent administration of the deployed system during runtime.

Embodiments of the IDE system **202** that are implemented on a cloud platform also facilitate collaborative project development whereby multiple developers **304** contribute design and programming input to a common automation system project **302**. Collaborative tools supported by the IDE system can manage design contributions from the multiple contributors and perform version control of the aggregate system project **302** to ensure project consistency.

Based on design and programming input from one or more developers **304**, IDE system **202** generates a system project **302** comprising one or more project files. The system project **302** encodes one or more of control programming; HMI, AR, and/or VR visualizations; device or sub-system configuration data (e.g., drive parameters, vision system configurations, telemetry device parameters, safety zone definitions, etc.); or other such aspects of an industrial automation system being designed. IDE system **202** can identify the appropriate target devices **306** on which respec-

tive aspects of the system project **302** should be executed (e.g., industrial controllers, HMI terminals, variable frequency drives, safety devices, etc.), translate the system project **302** to executable files that can be executed on the respective target devices, and deploy the executable files to their corresponding target devices **306** for execution, thereby commissioning the system project **302** to the plant floor for implementation of the automation project.

To support enhanced development capabilities, some embodiments of IDE system **202** can be built on an object-based data model rather than, or in addition to, a tag-based architecture. Automation objects **222** serve as the building block for this object-based development architecture. FIG. **4** is a diagram illustrating several example automation object properties that can be leveraged by the IDE system **202** in connection with building, deploying, and executing a system project **302**. Automation objects **222** can be created and augmented during design, integrated into larger data models, and consumed during runtime. These automation objects **222** provide a common data structure across the IDE system **202** and can be stored in an object library (e.g., part of memory **220**) for reuse. The object library can store predefined automation objects **222** representing various classifications of real-world industrial assets **402**, including but not limited to pumps, tanks, valves, motors, motor drives (e.g., variable frequency drives), industrial robots, actuators (e.g., pneumatic or hydraulic actuators), or other such assets. Automation objects **222** can represent elements at substantially any level of an industrial enterprise, including individual devices, machines made up of many industrial devices and components (some of which may be associated with their own automation objects **222**), and entire production lines or process control systems.

An automation object **222** for a given type of industrial asset can encode such aspects as 2D or 3D visualizations, alarms, control coding (e.g., logic or other type of control programming), analytics, startup procedures, testing protocols and scripts, validation reports, simulations, schematics, security protocols, and other such properties associated with the industrial asset **402** represented by the object **222**. Automation objects **222** can also be geotagged with location information identifying the location of the associated asset. During runtime of the system project **302**, the automation object **222** corresponding to a given real-world asset **402** can also record status or operational history data for the asset. In general, automation objects **222** serve as programmatic representations of their corresponding industrial assets **402**, and can be incorporated into a system project **302** as elements of control code, a 2D or 3D visualization, a knowledgebase or maintenance guidance system for the industrial assets, or other such aspects. Also, as will be discussed in more detail below, automation objects **222** can support inheritance, such that changes to any of the attributes of an automation object **222** discussed above are automatically propagated to instances of the automation object used throughout a system project **302**.

FIG. **5** is a diagram illustrating example data flows associated with creation of a system project **302** for an automation system being designed using IDE system **202** according to one or more embodiments. A client device **504** (e.g., a laptop computer, tablet computer, desktop computer, mobile device, wearable AR/VR appliance, etc.) executing an IDE client application **514** can access the IDE system's project development tools and leverage these tools to create a comprehensive system project **302** for an automation system being developed. Through interaction with the system's user interface component **204**, developers can submit



design input **512** to the IDE system **202** in various supported formats, including industry-specific control programming (e.g., control logic, structured text, sequential function charts, etc.) and HMI screen configuration input. Based on this design input **512** and information stored in an industry knowledgebase (predefined code modules **508** and visualizations **510**, guardrail templates **506**, physics-based rules **516**, etc.), user interface component **204** renders design feedback **518** designed to assist the developer in connection with developing a system project **302** for configuration, control, and visualization of an industrial automation system.

In addition to control programming and visualization definitions, some embodiments of IDE system **202** can be configured to receive digital engineering drawings (e.g., computer-aided design (CAD) files) as design input **512**. In such embodiments, project generation component **206** can generate portions of the system project **302**—e.g., by automatically generating control and/or visualization code—based on analysis of existing design drawings. Drawings that can be submitted as design input **512** can include, but are not limited to, P&ID drawings, mechanical drawings, flow diagrams, or other such documents. For example, a P&ID drawing can be imported into the IDE system **202**, and project generation component **206** can identify elements (e.g., tanks, pumps, etc.) and relationships therebetween conveyed by the drawings. Project generation component **206** can associate or map elements identified in the drawings with appropriate automation objects **222** corresponding to these elements (e.g., tanks, pumps, etc.) and add these automation objects **222** to the system project **302**. The device-specific and asset-specific automation objects **222** include suitable code and visualizations to be associated with the elements identified in the drawings. In general, the IDE system **202** can examine one or more different types of drawings (mechanical, electrical, piping, etc.) to determine relationships between devices, machines, and/or assets (including identifying common elements across different drawings) and intelligently associate these elements with appropriate automation objects **222**, code modules **508**, and/or visualizations **510**. The IDE system **202** can leverage physics-based rules **516** as well as pre-defined code modules **508** and visualizations **510** as necessary in connection with generating code or project data for system project **302**.

The IDE system **202** can also determine whether predefined visualization content is available for any of the objects discovered in the drawings and generate appropriate HMI screens or AR/VR content for the discovered objects based on these pre-defined visualizations. To this end, the IDE system **202** can store industry-specific, asset-specific, and/or application-specific visualizations **510** that can be accessed by the project generation component **206** as needed. These visualizations **510** can be classified according to industry or industrial vertical (e.g., automotive, food and drug, oil and gas, pharmaceutical, etc.), type of industrial asset (e.g., a type of machine or industrial device), a type of industrial application (e.g., batch processing, flow control, web tension control, sheet metal stamping, water treatment, etc.), or other such categories. Predefined visualizations **510** can comprise visualizations in a variety of formats, including but not limited to HMI screens or windows, mashups that aggregate data from multiple pre-specified sources, AR overlays, VR objects representing 3D virtualizations of the associated industrial asset, or other such visualization formats. IDE system **202** can select a suitable visualization for a given object based on a predefined association between the object type and the visualization content.

In another example, markings applied to an engineering drawing by a user can be understood by some embodiments of the project generation component **206** to convey a specific design intention or parameter. For example, a marking in red pen can be understood to indicate a safety zone, two circles connected by a dashed line can be interpreted as a gearing relationship, and a bold line may indicate a camming relationship. In this way, a designer can sketch out design goals on an existing drawing in a manner that can be understood and leveraged by the IDE system **202** to generate code and visualizations. In another example, the project generation component **206** can learn permissives and interlocks (e.g., valves and their associated states) that serve as necessary preconditions for starting a machine based on analysis of the user's CAD drawings. Project generation component **206** can generate any suitable code (ladder logic, function blocks, etc.), device configurations, and visualizations based on analysis of these drawings and markings for incorporation into system project **302**. In some embodiments, user interface component **204** can include design tools for developing engineering drawings within the IDE platform itself, and the project generation component **206** can generate this code as a background process as the user is creating the drawings for a new project. In some embodiments, project generation component **206** can also translate state machine drawings to a corresponding programming sequence, yielding at least skeletal code that can be enhanced by the developer with additional programming details as needed.

Also, or in addition, some embodiments of IDE system **202** can support goal-based automated programming. For example, the user interface component **204** can allow the user to specify production goals for an automation system being designed (e.g., specifying that a bottling plant being designed must be capable of producing at least 5000 bottles per second during normal operation) and any other relevant design constraints applied to the design project (e.g., budget limitations, available floor space, available control cabinet space, etc.). Based on this information, the project generation component **206** will generate portions of the system project **302** to satisfy the specified design goals and constraints. Portions of the system project **302** that can be generated in this manner can include, but are not limited to, device and equipment selections (e.g., definitions of how many pumps, controllers, stations, conveyors, drives, or other assets will be needed to satisfy the specified goal), associated device configurations (e.g., tuning parameters, network settings, drive parameters, etc.), control coding, or HMI screens suitable for visualizing the automation system being designed.

Some embodiments of the project generation component **206** can also generate at least some of the project code for system project **302** based on knowledge of parts that have been ordered for the project being developed. This can involve accessing the customer's account information maintained by an equipment vendor to identify devices that have been purchased for the project. Based on this information the project generation component **206** can add appropriate automation objects **222** and associated code modules **508** corresponding to the purchased assets, thereby providing a starting point for project development.

Some embodiments of project generation component **206** can also monitor customer-specific design approaches for commonly programmed functions (e.g., pumping applications, batch processes, palletizing operations, etc.) and generate recommendations for design modules (e.g., code modules **508**, visualizations **510**, etc.) that the user may wish to incorporate into a current design project based on an infer-



ence of the designer's goals and learned approaches to achieving the goal. To this end, some embodiments of project generation component 206 can be configured to monitor design input 512 over time and, based on this monitoring, learn correlations between certain design actions (e.g., addition of certain code modules or snippets to design projects, selection of certain visualizations, etc.) and types of industrial assets, industrial sequences, or industrial processes being designed. Project generation component 206 can record these learned correlations and generate recommendations during subsequent project development sessions based on these correlations. For example, if project generation component 206 determines, based on analysis of design input 512, that a designer is currently developing a control project involving a type of industrial equipment that has been programmed and/or visualized in the past in a repeated, predictable manner, the project generation component 206 can instruct user interface component 204 to render recommended development steps or code modules 508 the designer may wish to incorporate into the system project 302 based on how this equipment was configured and/or programmed in the past.

In some embodiments, IDE system 202 can also store and implement guardrail templates 506 that define design guardrails intended to ensure the project's compliance with internal or external design standards. Based on design parameters defined by one or more selected guardrail templates 506, user interface component 204 can provide, as a subset of design feedback 518, dynamic recommendations or other types of feedback designed to guide the developer in a manner that ensures compliance of the system project 302 with internal or external requirements or standards (e.g., certifications such as TUV certification, in-house design standards, industry-specific or vertical-specific design standards, etc.). This feedback 518 can take the form of text-based recommendations (e.g., recommendations to rewrite an indicated portion of control code to comply with a defined programming standard), syntax highlighting, error highlighting, auto-completion of code snippets, or other such formats. In this way, IDE system 202 can customize design feedback 518—including programming recommendations, recommendations of predefined code modules 508 or visualizations 510, error and syntax highlighting, etc.—in accordance with the type of industrial system being developed and any applicable in-house design standards.

Guardrail templates 506 can also be designed to maintain compliance with global best practices applicable to control programming or other aspects of project development. For example, user interface component 204 may generate and render an alert if a developer's control programming is deemed to be too complex as defined by criteria specified by one or more guardrail templates 506. Since different verticals (e.g., automotive, pharmaceutical, oil and gas, food and drug, marine, etc.) must adhere to different standards and certifications, the IDE system 202 can maintain a library of guardrail templates 506 for different internal and external standards and certifications, including customized user-specific guardrail templates 506. These guardrail templates 506 can be classified according to industrial vertical, type of industrial application, plant facility (in the case of custom in-house guardrail templates 506) or other such categories. During development, project generation component 206 can select and apply a subset of guardrail templates 506 determined to be relevant to the project currently being developed, based on a determination of such aspects as the industrial vertical to which the project relates, the type of industrial application being programmed (e.g., flow control,

web tension control, a certain batch process, etc.), or other such aspects. Project generation component 206 can leverage guardrail templates 506 to implement rules-based programming, whereby programming feedback (a subset of design feedback 518) such as dynamic intelligent autocorrection, type-aheads, or coding suggestions are rendered based on encoded industry expertise and best practices (e.g., identifying inefficiencies in code being developed and recommending appropriate corrections).

Users can also run their own internal guardrail templates 506 against code provided by outside vendors (e.g., OEMs) to ensure that this code complies with in-house programming standards. In such scenarios, vendor-provided code can be submitted to the IDE system 202, and project generation component 206 can analyze this code in view of in-house coding standards specified by one or more custom guardrail templates 506. Based on results of this analysis, user interface component 204 can indicate portions of the vendor-provided code (e.g., using highlights, overlaid text, etc.) that do not conform to the programming standards set forth by the guardrail templates 506, and display suggestions for modifying the code in order to bring the code into compliance. As an alternative or in addition to recommending these modifications, some embodiments of project generation component 206 can be configured to automatically modify the code in accordance with the recommendations to bring the code into conformance.

In making coding suggestions as part of design feedback 518, project generation component 206 can invoke selected code modules 508 stored in a code module database or selected automation objects 222 stored in an automation object library 502 (e.g., on memory 220). Code modules 508 comprise standardized coding segments for controlling common industrial tasks or applications (e.g., palletizing, flow control, web tension control, pick-and-place applications, conveyor control, etc.). Similarly, automation objects 222 representing respective industrial assets may have associated therewith standardize control code for monitoring and controlling their respective assets. In some embodiments, code modules 508 and/or automation objects 222 can be categorized according to one or more of an industrial vertical (e.g., automotive, food and drug, oil and gas, textiles, marine, pharmaceutical, etc.), an industrial application, or a type of machine or device to which the code module 508 or automation object 222 is applicable.

In some embodiments, project generation component 206 can infer a programmer's current programming task or design goal based on programmatic input being provided by the programmer (as a subset of design input 512), and determine, based on this task or goal, whether one of the pre-defined code modules 508 or automation objects 222 may be appropriately added to the control program being developed to achieve the inferred task or goal. For example, project generation component 206 may infer, based on analysis of design input 512, that the programmer is currently developing control code for transferring material from a first tank to another tank, and in response, recommend inclusion of a predefined code module 508 comprising standardized or frequently utilized code for controlling the valves, pumps, or other assets necessary to achieve the material transfer. Similarly, the project generation component 206 may recommend inclusion of an automation object 222 representing one of the tanks, or one of the other industrial assets involved in transferring the material (e.g., a valve, a pump, etc.), where the recommended automation object 222 includes associated control code for controlling its associated asset as well as a visualization object that can



be used to visualize the asset on an HMI application or another visualization application.

Customized guardrail templates **506** can also be defined to capture nuances of a customer site that should be taken into consideration in the project design. For example, a guardrail template **506** could record the fact that the automation system being designed will be installed in a region where power outages are common, and will factor this consideration when generating design feedback **518**; e.g., by recommending implementation of backup uninterruptable power supplies and suggesting how these should be incorporated, as well as recommending associated programming or control strategies that take these outages into account.

IDE system **202** can also use guardrail templates **506** to guide user selection of equipment or devices for a given design goal; e.g., based on the industrial vertical, type of control application (e.g., sheet metal stamping, die casting, palletization, conveyor control, web tension control, batch processing, etc.), budgetary constraints for the project, physical constraints at the installation site (e.g., available floor, wall or cabinet space; dimensions of the installation space; etc.), equipment already existing at the site, etc. Some or all of these parameters and constraints can be provided as design input **512**, and user interface component **204** can render the equipment recommendations as a subset of design feedback **518**. In conjunction with this equipment recommendation, the project generation component **206** can also recommend inclusion of corresponding automation objects **222** representing the recommended equipment for inclusion in the system project **302**.

In some embodiments, project generation component **206** can also determine whether some or all existing equipment can be repurposed for the new control system being designed. For example, if a new bottling line is to be added to a production area, there may be an opportunity to leverage existing equipment since some bottling lines already exist. The decision as to which devices and equipment can be reused will affect the design of the new control system. Accordingly, some of the design input **512** provided to the IDE system **202** can include specifics of the customer's existing systems within or near the installation site. In some embodiments, project generation component **206** can apply artificial intelligence (AI) or traditional analytic approaches to this information to determine whether existing equipment specified in design input **512** can be repurposed or leveraged. Based on results of this analysis, project generation component **206** can generate, as design feedback **518**, a list of any new equipment that may need to be purchased based on these decisions.

In some embodiments, IDE system **202** can offer design recommendations based on an understanding of the physical environment within which the automation system being designed will be installed. To this end, information regarding the physical environment can be submitted to the IDE system **202** (as part of design input **512**) in the form of 2D or 3D images or video of the plant environment. This environmental information can also be obtained from an existing digital twin of the plant, or by analysis of scanned environmental data obtained by a wearable AR appliance in some embodiments. Project generation component **206** can analyze this image, video, or digital twin data to identify physical elements within the installation area (e.g., walls, girders, safety fences, existing machines and devices, etc.) and physical relationships between these elements. This can include ascertaining distances between machines, lengths of piping runs, locations and distances of wiring harnesses or cable trays, etc. Based on results of this analysis, project

generation component **206** can add context to schematics generated as part of system project **302**, generate recommendations regarding optimal locations for devices or machines (e.g., recommending a minimum separation between power and data cables), or make other refinements to the system project **302**. At least some of this design data can be generated based on physics-based rules **516**, which can be referenced by project generation component **206** to determine such physical design specifications as minimum safe distances from hazardous equipment (which may also factor into determining suitable locations for installation of safety devices relative to this equipment, given expected human or vehicle reaction times defined by the physics-based rules **516**), material selections capable of withstanding expected loads, piping configurations and tuning for a specified flow control application, wiring gauges suitable for an expected electrical load, minimum distances between signal wiring and electromagnetic field (EMF) sources to ensure negligible electrical interference on data signals, or other such design features that are dependent on physical rules.

In an example use case, relative locations of machines and devices specified by physical environment information submitted to the IDE system **202** can be used by the project generation component **206** to generate design data for an industrial safety system. For example, project generation component **206** can analyze distance measurements between safety equipment and hazardous machines and, based on these measurements, determine suitable placements and configurations of safety devices and associated safety controllers that ensure the machine will shut down within a sufficient safety reaction time to prevent injury (e.g., in the event that a person runs through a light curtain).

In some embodiments, project generation component **206** can also analyze photographic or video data of an existing machine to determine inline mechanical properties such as gearing or camming and factor this information into one or more guardrail templates **506** or design recommendations.

As noted above, the system project **302** generated by IDE system **202** for a given automaton system being designed can be built upon an object-based architecture that uses automation objects **222** as building blocks. FIG. 6 is a diagram illustrating an example system project **302** that incorporates automation objects **222** into the project model. In this example, various automation objects **222** representing analogous industrial devices, systems, or assets of an automation system (e.g., processes, tanks, valves, pumps, etc.) have been incorporated into system project **302** as elements of a larger project data model **602**. The project data model **602** also defines hierarchical relationships between these automation objects **222**. According to an example relationship, a process automation object representing a batch process may be defined as a parent object to a number of child objects representing devices and equipment that carry out the process, such as tanks, pumps, and valves. Each automation object **222** has associated therewith object properties or attributes specific to its corresponding industrial asset (e.g., those discussed above in connection with FIG. 4), including executable control programming for controlling the asset (or for coordinating the actions of the asset with other industrial assets) and visualizations that can be used to render relevant information about the asset during runtime.

At least some of the attributes of each automation object **222** are default properties defined by the IDE system **202** based on encoded industry expertise pertaining to the asset represented by the objects. These default properties can include, for example, industry-standard or recommended control code for monitoring and controlling the asset repre-



sented by the automation object **222**, a 2D or 3D graphical object that can be used to visualize operational or statistical data for the asset, alarm conditions associated with the asset, analytic or reporting scripts designed to yield actionable insights into the asset's behavior, or other such properties. Other properties can be modified or added by the developer as needed (via design input **512**) to customize the automation object **222** for the particular asset and/or industrial application for which the system projects **302** is being developed. This can include, for example, associating customized control code, HMI screens, AR presentations, or help files associated with selected automation objects **222**. In this way, automation objects **222** can be created and augmented as needed during design for consumption or execution by target control devices during runtime.

Once development and testing on a system project **302** has been completed, commissioning tools supported by the IDE system **202** can simplify the process of commissioning the project in the field. When the system project **302** for a given automation system has been completed, the system project **302** can be deployed to one or more target control devices for execution. FIG. 7 is a diagram illustrating commissioning of a system project **302**. Project deployment component **208** can compile or otherwise translate a completed system project **302** into one or more executable files or configuration files that can be stored and executed on respective target industrial devices of the automation system (e.g., industrial controllers **118**, HMI terminals **114** or other types of visualization systems, motor drives **710**, telemetry devices, vision systems, safety relays, etc.).

Conventional control program development platforms require the developer to specify the type of industrial controller (e.g., the controller's model number) on which the control program will run prior to development, thereby binding the control programming to a specified controller. Controller-specific guardrails are then enforced during program development which limit how the program is developed given the capabilities of the selected controller. By contrast, some embodiments of the IDE system **202** can abstract project development from the specific controller type, allowing the designer to develop the system project **302** as a logical representation of the automation system in a manner that is agnostic to where and how the various control aspects of system project **302** will run. Once project development is complete and system project **302** is ready for commissioning, the user can specify (via user interface component **204**) target devices on which respective aspects of the system project **302** are to be executed. In response, an allocation engine of the project deployment component **208** will translate aspects of the system project **302** to respective executable files formatted for storage and execution on their respective target devices.

For example, system project **302** may include—among other project aspects—control code, visualization screen definitions, and motor drive parameter definitions. Upon completion of project development, a user can identify which target devices—including an industrial controller **118**, an HMI terminal **114**, and a motor drive **710**—are to execute or receive these respective aspects of the system project **302**. Project deployment component **208** can then translate the controller code defined by the system project **302** to a control program file **702** formatted for execution on the specified industrial controller **118** and send this control program file **702** to the controller **118** (e.g., via plant network **116**). Similarly, project deployment component **208** can translate the visualization definitions and motor drive parameter definitions to a visualization application **704** and

a device configuration file **708**, respectively, and deploy these files to their respective target devices for execution and/or device configuration.

In general, project deployment component **208** performs any conversions necessary to allow aspects of system project **302** to execute on the specified devices. Any inherent relationships, handshakes, or data sharing defined in the system project **302** are maintained regardless of how the various elements of the system project **302** are distributed. In this way, embodiments of the IDE system **202** can decouple the project from how and where the project is to be run. This also allows the same system project **302** to be commissioned at different plant facilities having different sets of control equipment. That is, some embodiments of the IDE system **202** can allocate project code to different target devices as a function of the particular devices found on-site. IDE system **202** can also allow some portions of the project file to be commissioned as an emulator or on a cloud-based controller.

As an alternative to having the user specify the target control devices to which the system project **302** is to be deployed, some embodiments of IDE system **202** can actively connect to the plant network **116** and discover available devices, ascertain the control hardware architecture present on the plant floor, infer appropriate target devices for respective executable aspects of system project **302**, and deploy the system project **302** to these selected target devices. As part of this commissioning process, IDE system **202** can also connect to remote knowledgebases (e.g., web-based or cloud-based knowledgebases) to determine which discovered devices are out of date or require firmware upgrade to properly execute the system project **302**. In this way, the IDE system **202** can serve as a link between device vendors and a customer's plant ecosystem via a trusted connection in the cloud.

Copies of system project **302** can be propagated to multiple plant facilities having varying equipment configurations using smart propagation, whereby the project deployment component **208** intelligently associates project components with the correct industrial asset or control device even if the equipment on-site does not perfectly match the defined target (e.g., if different pump types are found at different sites). For target devices that do not perfectly match the expected asset, project deployment component **208** can calculate the estimated impact of running the system project **302** on non-optimal target equipment and generate warnings or recommendations for mitigating expected deviations from optimal project execution.

As noted above, some embodiments of IDE system **202** can be embodied on a cloud platform. FIG. 8 is a diagram illustrating an example architecture in which cloud-based IDE services **802** are used to develop and deploy industrial applications to a plant environment. In this example, the industrial environment includes one or more industrial controllers **118**, HMI terminals **114**, motor drives **710**, servers **801** running higher level applications (e.g., ERP, MES, etc.), and other such industrial assets. These industrial assets are connected to a plant network **116** (e.g., a common industrial protocol network, an Ethernet/IP network, etc.) that facilitates data exchange between industrial devices on the plant floor. Plant network **116** may be a wired or a wireless network. In the illustrated example, the high-level servers **810** reside on a separate office network **108** that is connected to the plant network **116** (e.g., through a router **808** or other network infrastructure device).

In this example, IDE system **202** resides on a cloud platform **806** and executes as a set of cloud-based IDE



service **802** that are accessible to authorized remote client devices **504**. Cloud platform **806** can be any infrastructure that allows shared computing services (such as IDE services **802**) to be accessed and utilized by cloud-capable devices. Cloud platform **806** can be a public cloud accessible via the Internet by devices **504** having Internet connectivity and appropriate authorizations to utilize the IDE services **802**. In some scenarios, cloud platform **806** can be provided by a cloud provider as a platform-as-a-service (PaaS), and the IDE services **802** can reside and execute on the cloud platform **806** as a cloud-based service. In some such configurations, access to the cloud platform **806** and associated IDE services **802** can be provided to customers as a subscription service by an owner of the IDE services **802**. Alternatively, cloud platform **806** can be a private cloud operated internally by the industrial enterprise (the owner of the plant facility). An example private cloud platform can comprise a set of servers hosting the IDE services **802** and residing on a corporate network protected by a firewall.

Cloud-based implementations of IDE system **202** can facilitate collaborative development by multiple remote developers who are authorized to access the IDE services **802**. When a system project **302** is ready for deployment, the project **302** can be commissioned to the plant facility via a secure connection between the office network **108** or the plant network **116** and the cloud platform **806**. As discussed above, the industrial IDE services **802** can translate system project **302** to one or more appropriate executable files—control program files **702**, visualization applications **704**, device configuration files **708**, system configuration files **812**—and deploy these files to the appropriate devices in the plant facility to facilitate implementation of the automation project.

As noted above, a system project **302** generated by embodiments of the industrial IDE system **202** can incorporate a number of automation objects **222**. FIG. **9** is an illustration of an example automation object **222** that has been integrated into the project data model **602** of a system project **302**. As discussed above in connection with FIGS. **4** and **6**, a system project **302** can incorporate instances of automation objects **222** that serve as programmatic representations of industrial assets, processes, or other industrial entities. Assets that can be represented by a given automation object **222** can include device-level assets (e.g., motor drives, valves, pumps, etc.) as well as machine-level assets (stamping presses, tanks, tooling stations, etc.). An automation object **222** can represent an off-the-shelf industrial device or machine offered by device or equipment vendors, or may comprise custom automation objects **222** representing custom-built machines provided by an OEM or another type of machine builder.

The project data model **602** can define hierarchical relationships between multiple automation objects **222** that are integrated as part of the system project **302**. These hierarchical relationships can represent the physical and/or functional relationships between the represented assets. According to an example relationship, a process automation object **222** representing a batch process may be defined as a parent object to a number of child automation objects **222** representing devices and equipment that carry out the process, such as tanks, pumps, and valves. In another example, an automation object **222** representing a machine or production line can be defined as a parent object, under which are defined a number of child automation objects **222** representing the workstations or sub-machines within the machine or production line. These child automation objects **222** can themselves have a number of child automation objects **222**

representing the device-level assets that make up these workstations or sub-machines.

Each industrial object **222** can serve similar functions to those of data tags that serve as containers for input data received from, and output data sent to, its corresponding industrial asset (e.g., digital and analog data values received from the asset for processing by the system project **302**, as well as digital and analog values generated by the system project **302** and sent to the asset). In addition, each industrial object **222** comprises a number of programmatic attributes relating to the industrial asset being represented, examples of which are discussed above in connection with FIG. **4**. These attributes can include, for example, control logic that can be executed as part of the system project **302** to monitor and control the represented assets. This associated control logic can be pre-developed to exchange input and output data with its associated industrial asset via defined input and output tags corresponding to the asset's physical inputs and outputs (that is, the asset's digital and analog I/O). During execution of the control project **302**, the object's control logic can process inputs received from the asset and generate outputs directed to the asset based on results of this processing.

Additionally, the control logic associated with respective different automation objects **222** defined by the project data model **602** as having a hierarchical relationship with one another can interact or cooperate based on these defined relationships. For example, based on a defined hierarchical relationship between a first automation object **222** representing a tank (defined as a parent object) and a second automation object **222** representing a valve associated with the tank (defined as a child of the first object), the system project **302** can link the two sets of control logic associated with the first and second automation objects **222**, respectively, so that the control logic associated with the two automation objects **222** performs coordinated monitoring and control of the machine. Linking the two sets of control logic in this manner can comprise, for example, linking data tags of the child object **222** with corresponding data tags of the parent object **222** in accordance with the hierarchical relationship defined by the model **602**.

Industrial object **222** can also include associated HMI objects that can be used by a visualization system (e.g., an HMI application, a 2D or 3D augmented reality or virtual reality system, etc.) to render an animated graphical representation of the asset. These HMI objects can include one or more HMI interface screens designed to render information about the asset (e.g., a reporting screen that renders statistical or operational data for the asset, a screen that renders an animated graphical representation of the asset, etc.), individual graphical objects representing the asset that can be imported into an industrial visualization application, or other such objects.

The automation object **222** can also include analytic scripts designed to analyze data generated by the asset to produce insights into the asset's performance or health. Example analytics that can be performed by an automation object's analytic scripts can include, but are not limited to, assessments of the asset's current health and predicted future health (e.g., determinations of the asset's predicted time to failure), determinations of when the asset requires maintenance, or other such metrics. As with the automation object's control logic, the analytics scripts can be designed to interface with known data items generated by the industrial asset (e.g., data tags that are specific to the asset) so that the data associated with these data items can be processed by the scripts.



The automation object **222** can also define alarm information associated with the industrial asset. This alarm information can include definitions of the conditions that trigger the alarm (e.g., when a specified data item representing an operational metric of the asset falls outside a defined range of normal behavior, when a state of a specified digital tag satisfies an alarm condition, etc.) as well as an alarm message to be rendered in response to the alarm trigger. This alarm information can be referenced by a visualization system (e.g., an HMI application, an augmented reality or virtual reality system, etc.), which can render alarm messages for the industrial asset based on the alarm definitions defined by the automation object **222**.

Some embodiments of automation object **222** can also define test properties as part of a global testing framework supported by the IDE system **202**. These test properties can include object-specific test scripts designed to test and debug the automation object **222** and associated aspects of system project **302** that reference the object **222**. The object's test properties can also include object-specific test scenario definitions that define one or more test scenarios that may beneficially be run against the automation object **222** and associated project elements that reference the object **222**. The test scenario definitions can be pre-designed based on industrial expertise regarding the industrial asset or process represented by the automation object **222**. The test properties associated with automation objects **222** can mitigate the need to write test scripts to test and debug the system project **302**.

FIG. **10** is a diagram illustrating testing of an example system project **302** by the IDE system's project testing component **210** using test scripts **1002** bundled with an automation object **222**. Automation objects **222** can be provided with pre-bundled test scripts **1002** and/or definitions of test scenarios **1004** that are specific to the type of industrial asset represented by the automation object **222**. During or after development of system project **302** as described above, the IDE system's project testing component **210** can execute test scripts **1002** associated with one or more selected automation objects **222** as appropriate to verify proper responses of the system project **302**, thereby validating the project. To this end, test scripts **1002** can define simulated test inputs **1012** to be provided to the automation object **222** and/or associated project code in which the object **222** is used, as well as expected responses of the automation object **222** and its associated project code to the simulated inputs **1012**.

According to an example testing procedure, project testing component **210** can execute one or more test scripts **1002** associated with respective one or more automation objects **222** against system project **302**. Execution of the test scripts **1002** can involve, for example, feeding simulated test inputs **1012** to control code or other elements of system project **302** according to a sequence defined by the test scripts **1002**, setting values of digital or analog program variables defined by the system project **302** according to a defined sequence, initiating control routines of the system project **302** according to a defined sequence, testing animation objects or other visualization elements defined by the system project **302**, verifying data linkages between control routines, verifying relationships between program elements and drawing elements, confirming that device configuration settings or parameter values are appropriate for a given industrial application being carried out by the system project **302**, or otherwise interacting with system project **302** according to testing procedures defined by the test scripts **1002**. During testing, the project testing component **210** can monitor test

results **1006** or responses of the system project **302** to the test interactions defined by the test scripts **1002** and determine whether these test results **1006** match expected results defined by the test scripts **1002**. In this way, proper operation of the system project **302** can be verified prior to deployment without the need to develop custom test scripts to debug the system project code.

In some test scenarios, test scripts **1002** can define testing sequences that are applied to the system project **302** as a whole in a holistic manner rather than to a specific control program or routine. For example, the project testing component **210** can execute test scripts **1002** that verify linkages or relationships across design platforms—e.g., control code, visualization applications, electrical drawings, panel layout definitions, wiring schedules, piping diagrams, etc.—that may otherwise not be tested.

If the test results **1006** indicate an improper operation of one or more aspects of system project **302**, project testing component **210** may generate and render one or more design recommendations **1008** indicating possible modifications to the system project **302** that would correct operation of the project. These design recommendations **1008** may include, for example, control code modifications or replacements, recommended corrections of data tag addresses, recommended corrections to HMI graphical object references, recommended corrections to mechanical or electrical drawings for consistency with the control code (e.g., to add a missing output device to an electrical drawing corresponding to an output device referenced by the control programming), recommended modifications to an industrial device's configuration parameters, or other such corrections.

The testing properties of some automation objects **222** may define multiple test scenarios **1004** that should be run on the object **222** and its corresponding control code and project elements to ensure comprehensive testing of the object **222** and related code. These scenarios **1004** are based on pre-learned industrial expertise relating to the industrial asset or process represented by the automation objects and its related project elements. In some implementations, each defined test scenario **1004** may have its own associated test script **1002**, or may define a particular way to apply the test script **1002** (e.g., which routines of the system project's control code to validate, which other project elements should be cross-referenced for validation purposes, etc.). During testing of the system project **302**, project testing component **210** can execute the one or more test scripts **1002** in accordance with each defined test scenario **1004** in sequence in order to comprehensively validate proper operation of the system project **302** across all platforms (control programming, visualization configuration, drawings, device configurations, etc.).

In some embodiments, project testing component **210** can also be configured to generate a validation checklist based on analysis of the system project **302**, and output this validation checklist via the user interface component **204**. This validation checklist can provide instructions regarding on-site tests and checks that should be performed in connection with commissioning the automation system for which system project **302** is being developed. These may comprise tests that should be performed on the automation system hardware and electrical connections that cannot be performed via testing of the system project **302** alone. Example validation checklist may include lists of I/O points whose connectivity should be verified, instructions to visually inspect panel-mounted equipment, sequences of manual operator panel interactions that should be performed to verify proper machine operation, or other such information.



Returning to FIG. 9, an automation object 222 can also include, as an attribute, a historian configuration that defines data generated by the corresponding industrial asset that is to be archived in a data historian. This historian configuration can be referenced by a data historian system or application that executes a portion of the system project 302 to facilitate configuring the data historian system to collect and archive the data items defined by the configuration. As with other attributes of the automation object 222, the historian configuration attribute can specify a subset of the available data generated by the corresponding industrial asset that is known to be relevant to assessments of the asset's performance or health, based on relevant industry expertise encoded into the object 222.

Some embodiments of the automation object 222 can also define security features or protocols associated with the associated industrial asset. These security features can include, but are not limited to, definitions of user roles that are permitted to perform certain actions relative to the industrial asset, encryption protocols that are to be applied to data generated by the asset, network security protocols to be enforced for the asset, or other such security features. The security information defined by these embodiments of the automation object 222 can be used by the system project 302 to regulate access to specified functions of the industrial asset (e.g., as a function of user role), to configure network devices to support the specified network security protocols, or to configure other security-related devices.

Embodiments of the IDE system 202 can support a development architecture whereby changes made to an automation object 222 stored in the automation object library 502 are propagated to instances of that automation object 222 that are used in a system project 302. FIG. 11 is a diagram illustrating submission of automation object edits 1102 to the IDE system 202. As noted above, automation objects 222 are maintained in an automation object library 502 (which may be part of memory 220). Via interaction with user interface component 204 and the associated IDE editor 224, developers can add selected automation objects 222 from the library 502 to a system project 302 as instances of these automation objects 222. In the example depicted in FIG. 11, object 222a is an instance of an automation object 222 that has been selected and added to the system project 302 by the developer. In some scenarios, the project generation component 206 may also automatically select and add automation objects 222 to the project 302 based on inferences about the automation system for which the project 302 is being developed (e.g., based on design goals or engineering drawings submitted to the system 202).

The IDE editor 224 can allow a user to modify attributes of selected automation objects 222 that are stored in the library 502. To this end, user interface component 204 can generate and deliver user interfaces to a client device 504 (e.g., via an IDE client 514) that allow the user to browse the available automation objects 222 and submit edits 1102 to selected objects 222. Any of the attributes described above in connection with FIG. 9 can be modified in this manner for any of the defined automation objects 222. For example, a designer may wish to modify the control code associated with a particular industrial asset (e.g., a pump, a tank, a stamping press, etc.) having a defined automation object 222 stored in the library 502. Accordingly, the user can submit edits 1102 directed to the associated automation object 222 that update the control code. Such edits can be used to update the operating sequence or control behavior for the associated industrial asset.

Similarly, the user may submit edits 1102 to update the visualization properties of a selected automation object 222; e.g., to replace or edit a graphical representation of the corresponding asset. Edits 1102 can also be submitted to add alarms to, or remove alarms from, the alarm definition list associated with an object 222, or to edit existing alarm definitions. The security features, test scripts, and analytic code associated with an automation object 222 can also be modified by submitting appropriate edits 1102.

These edits 1102 are directed to the automation object definitions maintained in the automation object library 502. Upon receipt of object edits 1102 directed to a selected automation object 222 (submitted via user interface component 204), the project generation component 206 updates the target automation object 222 in accordance with the received edits 1102 to yield an updated automation object 222. This updated automation object 222 replaces the previous version of the automation object 222 in the library 502.

If instances of the automation object 222 that was subject to the edits 1102 had been added to an existing system project 302 before the edits 1102 were received, project generation component 206 can also update all instances of the automation object 222 found within the project 302. FIG. 12 is a diagram illustrating modification of instances of an automation object 222a in accordance with edits 1102 submitted to the master version of the automation object 222 stored in the library 502. When an automation object 222 in library 502 has been modified as described above, the project generation component 206 identifies all instances of the automation object 222a used throughout any system project 302 that uses the object 222, and propagates the modifications to these instances. This can include updating the control code, visualizations, analytics code, security features, or other attributes to reflect the modifications defined by the edits 1102. In this way, all instances of an automation object 222a automatically inherit modifications made to the master version of the automation object 222 stored in the library 502.

FIG. 12 depicts an example scenario in which the system project 302 is stored on the IDE system 202 itself (e.g., on cloud-based storage if the IDE system 202 is implemented as a cloud service, as depicted in FIG. 8). However, in some embodiments, the IDE system 202 can also propagate automation object edits to system projects that have been deployed to local client devices for local editing. FIG. 13 is a diagram illustrating downloading of a copy of system project 302 from IDE system 202 to a local client device 504. In this example, client device 504 executes an IDE client 514 that allows the client device 504 to access the IDE system's project development tools and environment. The IDE client 514 can be served to the client device 504 by the IDE system 202, or may be a client application installed on client device 504 and configured to interface with the IDE system 202. A user can interact with the IDE client 514 to copy a version 302<sub>1</sub> of system project 302 from the cloud-based IDE system 202 to the client device's local storage for local viewing and development. The master copy of the system project 302 is maintained on the IDE system 202 after the local version 302<sub>1</sub> has been copied.

Once copied to the client device 504, a developer can view and edit the local version 302<sub>1</sub> using project development tools supported by the IDE client 514. At least some of these development tools can be similar to those supported by the IDE system 202 described above (see, e.g., FIG. 5). For example, some embodiments of IDE client 514 can support the use of design guardrails to ensure that local edits made



to the local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of the project—e.g., control program changes, HMI modifications, changes to device configuration parameters, modifications to automation objects, etc.—comply with internal or external design standards. As in previous examples, various embodiments of IDE client **514** can allow the user to submit edits to the local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of the project as one or more of control programming (e.g., ladder logic, DLS programming, sequential function charts, structured text, function block diagrams, etc.), design changes to visualization applications such as HMIs (e.g., addition, removal, or relocation of graphical objects), industrial device configuration parameter values, or other such design input.

In an example scenario, a developer may choose to modify an existing system project **302** in order to adapt the project **302** for deployment on an automation system having characteristics that deviate from a typical installation, and which necessitate modifications to the system project **302**. For example, the system project **302** may be designed to program and configure a type of standardized automation system built to carry out a particular industrial function, and which is installed at multiple locations or facilities of an industrial enterprise. A new installation of this automation system may deviate from standard installations of the system in a number of ways, including but not limited to replacement of one or more devices of the automation system with devices provided by an alternative vendor, addition or omission of a workstation, installation modifications to accommodate physical constraints of the installation location, special control requirements that deviate from standard requirements (e.g., differences in product design, control modifications to accommodate differences in materials or parts used to manufacture the product), or other such deviations. In order to accommodate these changes, the developer may download a local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of the system project **302** and implement the necessary modifications on the local version **302<sub>1</sub>**.

FIG. 14 is a diagram illustrating propagation of automation object edits to a locally stored copy of a system project **302**. In this example scenario, a user at client device **504b** has downloaded a local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of a system project **302** as described above in connection with FIG. 13. The automation object library **502** containing the master versions of automation objects **222** remains stored on the cloud platform in association with the IDE system **202**. As such any authorized developer can access the automation library **502** to not only add selected automation objects **222** to a system project **302**, but also to modify selected automation objects **222** as part of development of a project, or to reflect modifications to the corresponding industrial assets represented by the objects **222**. In the example illustrated in FIG. 14, a developer at client devices **504a** submits a set of edits **1102** directed to a selected automation object **222** stored on the library **502** (e.g., to update the object's control code, visualization representation, testing scripts, etc.). In response to receipt of these edits **1102**, the project generation component **206** (not shown in FIG. 14) updates the master version of the selected automation object **222** stored in the library **502** in accordance with the edits **1102**.

Moreover, when the edits have been implemented on the selected automation object **222**, the project generation component **206** also identifies all locally stored and remotely stored versions of any system projects **302** that have incorporated instances of the selected automation object **222**. This includes identifying any system projects **302** stored on cloud storage in association with the IDE system **202**, as well as any versions **302<sub>1</sub>** of the system project **302** that had been

downloaded to local client devices (e.g., client device **504b**) for local development. In this regard, a collaboration management component **210** may track all instances of a system project **302** that have been downloaded to local client devices so that these local versions of the project **302** can be updated as needed in response to modifications submitted to the cloud-based IDE system **202**.

In response to submission of the object edits **1102** and corresponding modification of the master version of the automation object **222** to which the edits **1102** are directed, the project generation component **206** also distributes automation object updates **1402** to all IDE clients **514b** on which are stored local versions **302<sub>1</sub>** of a system project **302** that uses the automation object **222**. The updates **1402** reflect the automation object edits **1102** that were submitted by the developer using client device **504a** and, when executed by the local IDE client **514b**, update all instances of the automation object **222** in accordance with the edits **1102**. In this way, updates to an automation object **222** on the object library **502** are automatically broadcast to all instances of the object **222** that are currently used in system projects **302**.

In some embodiments, a local developer at client device **504b** may be afforded the option to allow the updates **1402** to be incorporated into their local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of the system project **302**, or to deny implementation of the updates **1402**. Accordingly, before updating the local versions of the automation object **222**, the user interface component **204** may render information about the object edits **1102** on the user's client device **504b**, and can also render a prompt for approval from the developer to implement the edits locally. The information about the edits **1102** can comprise, for example, an identity of the automation object **222** that is affected by the edits and a summary of each modification to the object **222** that will be implemented by the edit (e.g., indications of which object attributes will be modified, and how these attributes will be changed). Based on a review of these edits, the local developer may select to implement the updates **1402** on their local version **302<sub>1</sub>** or, alternatively, to deny the edits and prevent updates **1402** from being implemented on their local version **302<sub>1</sub>** of the project **302**.

As noted above, a project data model **602** can define hierarchical relationships between multiple automation objects **222** that are included in a system project **302** (see, e.g., FIG. 6). FIG. 15 is a graphical representation of a simple two-tier relationship hierarchy between automation objects **222**. The representation depicted in FIG. 15 can be generated by the user interface components **204** and rendered within the development interface of the IDE system **202**. At least some of the hierarchical relationships between automation objects **222** can be defined by the user during project development. For example, a portion of the design input **512** submitted by the user can specify automation objects **222** to be included in the system project **302** as well as linkages between the automation objects **222** that define functional or hierarchical relationships between the objects **222**. In the example depicted in FIG. 15, a first automation object **222a** representing a tank (Tank **100**) has been linked to two other automation objects **222b** and **222c** representing the tanks inlet and outlet solenoid valves, respectively. The valve automation objects **222b** and **222c** act as child objects to the parent tank object **222a**, reflecting the functional relationships of the analogous physical assets.

Each automation object **222** has a number of associated inputs and outputs, represented as labeled nodes **1502** on the objects' graphical representations. The inputs and outputs available for an object **222** depends on the type of industrial asset, device, process, or entity represented by the object



222. Users can define relationships between the objects 222 as data linkages between selected inputs and outputs of the objects 222. For example, an output of the inlet valve object 222*b* representing the corresponding valve's closed status can be linked to an input on the tank automation object 222*a* for reading the closed status of the inlet valve. This link causes the inlet valve's closed status to be provided to, and processed by, the tank object 222*a*. The inlet valve object's 222*b* open status output can similarly be linked to an appropriate input on the tank object 222*a*. Similar data linkages can be defined between the tank object 222*a* and the outlet valve object 222*c*. Linkages between objects' inputs and outputs can be represented by connecting lines 1504 between the nodes 1502 representing the linked inputs and outputs.

By selectively linking inputs and outputs of automation objects 222 in this manner, hierarchical parent-child relationships can be defined for any number of automation objects 222 in a system project 302, and these relationships can be recorded in the project data model 602 as illustrated in FIG. 6. Although FIG. 15 depicts only a two-tier hierarchy comprising only three automation objects 222, any number of automation objects 222 representing various industrial assets, devices, processes, production lines, plants, or other industrial entities can be linked to form object hierarchies having more than two levels. These defined hierarchies can reflect functional or hierarchical relationships between the corresponding industrial entities and assets. For example, an object 222 representing a plant may have a number of child objects 222 representing production lines, which themselves may have child objects 222 representing machines and industrial devices that make up the respective lines

If the system project 302 is viewed during runtime such that live data from the running automation systems are used to animate the project view, the user interface component 204 can render the objects 222, the associated linkages, and the data flows between the objects 222. In the example depicted in FIG. 15, a numerical value is rendered next to each object node 1502, where the value represents the value currently being generated or consumed by that node 1502.

Creating hierarchical relationships between automation objects 222 in this manner is a mode of project development supported by the IDE system 202 that serves to define functional aspects of the resulting system project 302. For example, as noted above, linking two or more automation objects 222 that each have associated control logic for monitoring and controlling their corresponding industrial assets can cause the control logic associated with the respective objects 222 to be linked, such that data values generated by the logic of one automation object 222 is consumed by the logic of another linked automation object 222 in accordance with the user-defined links. The resulting aggregated control logic can be used to monitor and control the aggregated system represented by the linked automation objects (e.g., the system of tanks and valves depicted in FIG. 15).

The parent-child relationships between automation objects 222 can also determine inheritance of object configurations between those objects 222. For example, as noted above, some automation objects 222 can include historian configuration attributes that define data logging features for associated industrial assets. At least some of these data logging attributes can be set by the user during design of the system project 302; e.g., by submitting data logging configuration parameters for the automation objects 222 as part of design input 512 (see FIG. 5). Data logging configuration parameters—as well as other attributes of the automation object 222—can be set by invoking an object edit window

that allows the user to view and edit the object's modifiable attributes. This window can be invoked by selecting an object properties button 1506 associated with each object representation. In other scenarios, data logging attributes associated with a given automation object 222 may be pre-defined as part of the object's default configuration based on pre-encoded knowledge of common data collection requirements for the industrial asset represented by the object 222.

During runtime, the data logging configuration parameters associated with an automation object 222 can be referenced by a data historian system or application that executes a portion of the system project 302. In some embodiments, the project deployment component 208 can translate the historian or data logging configuration associated with each automation object instance to a suitable data historian configuration file, and can then send this configuration file to the appropriate data collection systems to facilitate configuring those systems in accordance with the object-based historian configuration parameters. The object's data logging configuration instructs the data historian system as to which data items associated with the object's corresponding industrial asset are to be collected and archived, and can also specify other data logging attributes, including but not limited to a frequency at which the data items are to be collected, a location to which the logged data is to be stored, an organization or schema for the logged data, etc. The object's historian configuration can also specify conditions under which specified data items are to be collected; e.g., on a periodic time-series basis or in response to a defined trigger condition. In this way, the data historian attributes that are embedded natively within the automation objects 222 can facilitate configuration of data historians used to collect and archive data generated by the controlled industrial system.

If an automation object 222 having data historian attributes are linked to other automation objects as part of an object hierarchy, as discussed above, data logging properties associated with the object 222 can be propagated up or down the hierarchy to other linked automation objects 222. The manner in which data logging configuration information is propagated across an object hierarchy can depend on the defined parent-child relationships between the objects 222. For example, in the example depicted in FIG. 15, in which a tank object 222*a* serves as a parent having two child objects 222*b* and 222*c* representing the tank's inlet and outlet valves, the data historian configuration associated with the tank object 222*a* can not only define data logging attributes for the tank itself, but can also control how and when data is logged for the two valves represented by the child objects 222*b* and 222*c*.

In general, a parent automation object 222 representing a particular asset (e.g., a tank, a stamping press, etc.) may be pre-encoded with asset-specific knowledge of which child assets (e.g., valves, motor drives, etc.) are typically associated with the parent asset, as well knowledge of data that is available from these child assets. Based on this knowledge as well as the data logging attributes defined for the parent object 222 (either user-defined or pre-defined), the parent object 222 can identify conditions under which data generated by the child assets should be collected and archived, as well as a frequency at which the child asset's data should be collected, a location at which the data should be archived, or other such data logging features. Based on this information, the parent object 222 can configure the child object's data



logging attributes accordingly, yielding an aggregate data logging configuration for the automation system being monitored and controlled.

In some embodiments, user-defined data historian attributes for a selected automation object **222** can be submitted to the master version of the automation object **222** maintained in the automation object library **502** as an automation object edit **1102** (see FIG. **11**). In some scenarios, the system **202** can propagate the historian configuration edit to other instances of the modified automation object **222** as described above in connection with FIG. **12**. Alternatively, the user may specify that the edit is only to be applied to subsequently created instances of the automation object **222**, such that existing instances of the automation object maintain their existing configurations, while instances created after submission of the edit will reflect the new data logging configuration.

Some embodiments of the IDE system **202** can allow users to encapsulate a hierarchy of multiple automation objects **222** into a single encapsulated object that can be moved or copied throughout the system project **302**. FIG. **16** is an example graphical representation of three encapsulated automation objects **1602a-1602c**. Encapsulated object **1602a** is an encapsulated version of the object hierarchy depicted in FIG. **15** for Tank **100**, while encapsulated objects **1602b** and **1602c** represent object hierarchies for two other tanks (Tank **200** and Tank **500**). An encapsulated object **1602** serves as a reusable unit representation of an object hierarchy having any number of hierarchical levels. Each encapsulated object **1602** can have associated inputs and outputs (not shown in FIG. **16**) that allow the encapsulated object to be linked to other automation objects **222** or encapsulated object **1602**. The inputs and outputs associated with a given encapsulated object **1602** can depend on the individual automation objects **222** within the hierarchy represented by the encapsulated object **1602**, as well as the defined relationships between those objects **222**.

Once created, an encapsulated object **1602** can be moved or replicated throughout a system project **302**, or between projects, as needed. When an encapsulated object **1602** is copied, the entirety of the automation object hierarchy represented by the encapsulated object **1602** is replicated at the location of the new instance of the encapsulated object **1602**. The new instance of the encapsulated object **1602** includes instances of all automation objects **222** included in the original encapsulated object **1602**, the object attributes associated with those objects **222**, and the data linkages between objects **222** defined in the original encapsulated object **1602**. If the system project **302** is being viewed during runtime of the automation system being monitored and controlled, the user can select and expand an encapsulated object **1602** to view the hierarchy of linked automation objects **222** represented by the encapsulated object **1602**, as well as the data flows between those objects **222**. In the example depicted in FIGS. **15** and **16**, expanding the encapsulated object **1602a** depicted in FIG. **16** causes the system **202** to display the automation object hierarchy illustrated in FIG. **15**, together with the real-time data flows between the linked objects **222**. The hierarchical representation can then be selectively collapsed back to the encapsulated representation as desired.

By allowing multi-level sets of linked automation objects **222** to be encapsulated into a reusable encapsulated objects **1602** as described above, the system **202** allows selected object hierarchies to be scaled across a system project **302**, or between projects **302**, as needed. This encapsulation approach is not limited to encapsulation of object hierar-

chies. Rather, in some embodiments, an encapsulated object **1602** can represent any combination of automation objects, control code routines (e.g., code modules **508** or custom routines), or other programmatic elements supported by the IDE system **202**.

As noted above in connection with FIGS. **7** and **8**, a system project **302** can include, as part of the project definition, device configuration information that can be translated by the project deployment component **208** into device configuration files **708**, which can then be deployed to their corresponding industrial devices to facilitate configuring those devices in accordance with the system project definitions. Some embodiments of the IDE system **202** can allow this device configuration information to be defined as attributes of automation objects **222** corresponding to the industrial devices to be configured. Device configuration information for a given automation object **222** can be submitted to the system **202** as part of the automation object edits **1102** (see FIG. **11**) directed to that object **222**. In an example scenario, device parameters for an automation object **222** can be edited by invoking an object editing window that is accessible via an editing button **1506** on the object **222**. The particular device parameters rendered on this editing window and made available for editing depend on the type of industrial device represented by the automation object. Once the user has set the device configuration parameters as desired, the edited device configuration then become an embedded attribute of the automation object **222**, which remains bound to the object **222**. When the system project **302** is deployed by the project deployment component **208** (see FIGS. **7** and **8**), any device configuration information embedded in an automation object **222** included in the project **302** is translated to a corresponding device configuration file **708** for the industrial device represented by the object **222**, and the resulting device configuration file **780** is deployed to the device.

Industrial devices that can be configured in this manner can include, but are not limited to, motor drives, industrial controllers, telemetry devices, industrial robots, HMI terminals or other types of visualization devices, safety relays, data historians, network infrastructure devices (e.g., routers, hubs, switches, etc.), or other industrial devices. Substantially any type of device configuration parameter can be associated with an automation object **222** for deployment to an associated industrial device, including but not limited to network or communication settings (e.g., network addresses), operating mode settings, high or low operating limits, operating parameters (e.g., parameters of a variable frequency drive or another type of industrial device), scale factors, security settings, power settings, safety settings, or other such device configuration settings.

FIGS. **17-19** illustrate various methodologies in accordance with one or more embodiments of the subject application. While, for purposes of simplicity of explanation, the methodologies shown herein are shown and described as a series of acts, it is to be understood and appreciated that the subject innovation is not limited by the order of acts, as some acts may, in accordance therewith, occur in a different order and/or concurrently with other acts from that shown and described herein. For example, those skilled in the art will understand and appreciate that a methodology could alternatively be represented as a series of interrelated states or events, such as in a state diagram. Moreover, not all illustrated acts may be required to implement a methodology in accordance with the innovation. Furthermore, interaction diagram(s) may represent methodologies, or methods, in accordance with the subject disclosure when disparate enti-



ties enact disparate portions of the methodologies. Further yet, two or more of the disclosed example methods can be implemented in combination with each other, to accomplish one or more features or advantages described herein.

FIG. 17 illustrates an example methodology 1700 for creating and encapsulating a hierarchy of automation objects within an industrial system project using an industrial IDE system. Initially, at 1702, design input is received via interaction with an industrial IDE system. The design input can be submitted in the form of one or more of industrial controller programming (e.g., ladder logic, sequential function charts, scripted control code such as an industrial DSL, etc.), HMI screen development input, industrial device or equipment selections, engineering drawing input, etc. In some embodiments, the design input can also include completed engineering drawings (e.g., P&ID drawings, electrical drawings, mechanical drawings, etc.), which can be parsed and analyzed by the industrial IDE to identify components of the industrial automation system being designed (e.g., industrial devices, machines, equipment, conduit, piping, etc.) as well as functional and physical relationships between these components.

The design input also comprises selection of automation objects from a library of automation objects for inclusion in the system project. The automation objects are building blocks for the industrial automation system project and represent various types of real-world industrial assets or processes, including but not limited to pumps, tanks, valves, motors, motor drives (e.g., variable frequency drives), industrial robots, actuators (e.g., pneumatic or hydraulic actuators), or other such assets. The automation objects are associated with various attributes or properties as a function of their represented asset or process (e.g., control code, visualization objects or interfaces, test scripts, security features or protocols, etc.).

At 1704, further design input is received that defines hierarchical relationships between selected automation objects that were added to the project at step 1702, yielding a hierarchy of automation objects. In some embodiments, the hierarchical relationships can be defined via interactions with graphical representations of the automation objects rendered in the development workspace of the IDE system. For example, inputs and outputs associated with the automation objects can be selectively linked to one another to specify that selected output data from a first automation object is to be consumed by a selected data input of a second automation object. These links can define parent-child relationships between selected automation objects, yielding an object hierarchy that reflects physical and/or functional relationships between the physical industrial assets represented by the objects. The hierarchical relationships can link functionalities or attributes of the automation objects; e.g., by merging control code association with the linked objects to yield control programming capable of monitoring and controlling an automation system comprising the represented industrial assets.

At 1706, a determination is made as to whether an instruction to encapsulate the hierarchy of automation objects defined at step 1704 is received. If such an instruction is received (YES at step 1706), the methodology proceeds to step 1708, where a single encapsulated object representing the hierarchy of automation objects is created. The encapsulated object comprises data inputs and outputs that can be linked to other automation objects or encapsulated objects. The encapsulated object's inputs and outputs depend on the individual automation objects that are represented by the encapsulated object and the defined relation-

ships therebetween. This encapsulated object is scalable across the system project, such that the encapsulated object can be moved or copied across the project or across multiple projects. When the encapsulated object is copied, the new instance of the encapsulated object includes the functionality of the automation object hierarchy defined for the original encapsulated object, as well as any user-defined attributes of the automation objects that make up the hierarchy.

FIG. 18a illustrates a first part of an example methodology 1800a for configuring, within an automation system project, data logging attributes for an automation system to be monitored and controlled by the system project. Initially, at 1802, design input is received via interaction with an industrial IDE system (similar to step 1702 of methodology 1700). At 1804, further design input is received that defines hierarchical relationships between selected automation objects added to the project at step 1802, yielding a hierarchy of automation objects (similar to step 1704 of methodology 1700).

At 1806, further design input is received that sets, as attributes of a first of the automation objects that represents an industrial asset, data logging configuration settings for the industrial asset. These data logging configuration settings can include, but are not limited to, identities of which data items associated with the object's corresponding industrial asset are to be collected and archived, a frequency at which the data items are to be collected, a storage location for the logged data, an organization or schema for the logged data, etc. At 1808, the data logging configuration settings received at step 1806 are associated with the first automation object, such that the data logging configuration becomes an embedded attribute of the object.

At 1810, a determination is made, based on the object hierarchy defined at step 1804, as to whether the first automation object has a parent-child relationship with a second automation object in the hierarchy. If such a relationship is defined (YES at step 1810), the methodology proceeds to step 1812, where a data logging configuration of the second automation object is set based on the relationship between the defined first and second automation objects and the data logging configuration of the first automation object. In an example scenario, based on the object relationships and the first object's data logging configuration, the first object may identify conditions under which data generated by the second object's corresponding asset should be collected and archived, as well as a frequency at which this data should be collected, a location at which the data should be archived, or other such data logging features. Based on this information, the first object can configure the second object's data logging attributes accordingly, yielding an aggregate data logging configuration for the automation system being monitored and controlled.

The methodology then proceeds to the second part 1800b illustrated in FIG. 18b. At 1814, a determination is made as to whether an instruction to deploy the system project is received. If such an instruction is received (YES at step 1814), the methodology proceeds to step 1816, where the system project is compiled into one or more executable files that can be deployed and executed on industrial devices of the automation system. The executable files include a historian configuration file that configures one or more data historians in accordance with the data logging configurations defined in the first and second automation objects.

FIG. 19 illustrates an example methodology 1900 for defining industrial device configuration within an automation system project using automation objects. Initially, at 1902, design input is received for an industrial automation



system project via interaction with an industrial IDE system (similar to step 1702 of methodology 1700). At 1904, further design input is received that defines hierarchical relationships between selected automation objects to yield a hierarchy of automation objects (similar to step 1704 of methodology 1700).

At 1906, further design input is received that sets, as attributes of an automation object representing an industrial device, device configuration parameters for the industrial device. Example device configuration parameters that can be set in this manner can include, but are not limited to, network or communication settings (e.g., network addresses), operating mode settings, high or low operating limits, operating parameters (e.g., parameters of a variable frequency drive or another type of industrial device), scale factors, security settings, power settings, or other such device configuration settings. In some embodiments, the device configuration parameters can be set by interacting with a graphical representation of the automation object to invoke a device configuration window, which allows a user to enter values of the configuration parameters. The device parameters rendered on this configuration window and made available for editing depends on the type of industrial device represented by the automation object. At 1908, the device configuration parameters received at step 1906 are associated with the automation object, such that the parameter become embedded attributes of the object.

At 1910, a determination is made as to whether an instruction to deploy the system project is received. If such an instruction is received (YES at step 1910), the methodology proceeds to step 1912, where the system project is compiled into one or more executable files that can be deployed and executed on industrial devices of an automation system. The executable files include a device configuration file that configures the industrial device corresponding to the automation object in accordance with the device configuration parameters defined in the automation object.

Embodiments, systems, and components described herein, as well as control systems and automation environments in which various aspects set forth in the subject specification can be carried out, can include computer or network components such as servers, clients, programmable logic controllers (PLCs), automation controllers, communications modules, mobile computers, on-board computers for mobile vehicles, wireless components, control components and so forth which are capable of interacting across a network. Computers and servers include one or more processors—electronic integrated circuits that perform logic operations employing electric signals—configured to execute instructions stored in media such as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), a hard drives, as well as removable memory devices, which can include memory sticks, memory cards, flash drives, external hard drives, and so on.

Similarly, the term PLC or automation controller as used herein can include functionality that can be shared across multiple components, systems, and/or networks. As an example, one or more PLCs or automation controllers can communicate and cooperate with various network devices across the network. This can include substantially any type of control, communications module, computer, Input/Output (I/O) device, sensor, actuator, and human machine interface (HMI) that communicate via the network, which includes control, automation, and/or public networks. The PLC or automation controller can also communicate to and control various other devices such as standard or safety-rated I/O modules including analog, digital, programmed/intelligent

I/O modules, other programmable controllers, communications modules, sensors, actuators, output devices, and the like.

The network can include public networks such as the internet, intranets, and automation networks such as control and information protocol (CIP) networks including DeviceNet, ControlNet, safety networks, and Ethernet/IP. Other networks include Ethernet, DH/DH+, Remote I/O, Fieldbus, Modbus, Profibus, CAN, wireless networks, serial protocols, and so forth. In addition, the network devices can include various possibilities (hardware and/or software components). These include components such as switches with virtual local area network (VLAN) capability, LANs, WANs, proxies, gateways, routers, firewalls, virtual private network (VPN) devices, servers, clients, computers, configuration tools, monitoring tools, and/or other devices.

In order to provide a context for the various aspects of the disclosed subject matter, FIGS. 20 and 21 as well as the following discussion are intended to provide a brief, general description of a suitable environment in which the various aspects of the disclosed subject matter may be implemented. While the embodiments have been described above in the general context of computer-executable instructions that can run on one or more computers, those skilled in the art will recognize that the embodiments can be also implemented in combination with other program modules and/or as a combination of hardware and software.

Generally, program modules include routines, programs, components, data structures, etc., that perform particular tasks or implement particular abstract data types. Moreover, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the inventive methods can be practiced with other computer system configurations, including single-processor or multiprocessor computer systems, minicomputers, mainframe computers, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, distributed computing systems, as well as personal computers, hand-held computing devices, microprocessor-based or programmable consumer electronics, and the like, each of which can be operatively coupled to one or more associated devices.

The illustrated embodiments herein can be also practiced in distributed computing environments where certain tasks are performed by remote processing devices that are linked through a communications network. In a distributed computing environment, program modules can be located in both local and remote memory storage devices.

Computing devices typically include a variety of media, which can include computer-readable storage media, machine-readable storage media, and/or communications media, which two terms are used herein differently from one another as follows. Computer-readable storage media or machine-readable storage media can be any available storage media that can be accessed by the computer and includes both volatile and nonvolatile media, removable and non-removable media. By way of example, and not limitation, computer-readable storage media or machine-readable storage media can be implemented in connection with any method or technology for storage of information such as computer-readable or machine-readable instructions, program modules, structured data or unstructured data.

Computer-readable storage media can include, but are not limited to, random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), electrically erasable programmable read only memory (EEPROM), flash memory or other memory technology, compact disk read only memory (CD-ROM), digital versatile disk (DVD), Blu-ray disc (BD) or other optical disk storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices,



solid state drives or other solid state storage devices, or other tangible and/or non-transitory media which can be used to store desired information. In this regard, the terms “tangible” or “non-transitory” herein as applied to storage, memory or computer-readable media, are to be understood to exclude only propagating transitory signals per se as modifiers and do not relinquish rights to all standard storage, memory or computer-readable media that are not only propagating transitory signals per se.

Computer-readable storage media can be accessed by one or more local or remote computing devices, e.g., via access requests, queries or other data retrieval protocols, for a variety of operations with respect to the information stored by the medium.

Communications media typically embody computer-readable instructions, data structures, program modules or other structured or unstructured data in a data signal such as a modulated data signal, e.g., a carrier wave or other transport mechanism, and includes any information delivery or transport media. The term “modulated data signal” or signals refers to a signal that has one or more of its characteristics set or changed in such a manner as to encode information in one or more signals. By way of example, and not limitation, communication media include wired media, such as a wired network or direct-wired connection, and wireless media such as acoustic, RF, infrared and other wireless media.

With reference again to FIG. 20, the example environment 2000 for implementing various embodiments of the aspects described herein includes a computer 2002, the computer 2002 including a processing unit 2004, a system memory 2006 and a system bus 2008. The system bus 2008 couples system components including, but not limited to, the system memory 2006 to the processing unit 2004. The processing unit 2004 can be any of various commercially available processors. Dual microprocessors and other multi-processor architectures can also be employed as the processing unit 2004.

The system bus 2008 can be any of several types of bus structure that can further interconnect to a memory bus (with or without a memory controller), a peripheral bus, and a local bus using any of a variety of commercially available bus architectures. The system memory 2006 includes ROM 2010 and RAM 2012. A basic input/output system (BIOS) can be stored in a non-volatile memory such as ROM, erasable programmable read only memory (EPROM), EEPROM, which BIOS contains the basic routines that help to transfer information between elements within the computer 2002, such as during startup. The RAM 2012 can also include a high-speed RAM such as static RAM for caching data.

The computer 2002 further includes an internal hard disk drive (HDD) 2014 (e.g., EIDE, SATA), one or more external storage devices 2016 (e.g., a magnetic floppy disk drive (FDD) 2016, a memory stick or flash drive reader, a memory card reader, etc.) and an optical disk drive 2020 (e.g., which can read or write from a CD-ROM disc, a DVD, a BD, etc.). While the internal HDD 2014 is illustrated as located within the computer 2002, the internal HDD 2014 can also be configured for external use in a suitable chassis (not shown). Additionally, while not shown in environment 2000, a solid state drive (SSD) could be used in addition to, or in place of, an HDD 2014. The HDD 2014, external storage device(s) 2016 and optical disk drive 2020 can be connected to the system bus 2008 by an HDD interface 2024, an external storage interface 2026 and an optical drive interface 2028, respectively. The interface 2024 for external drive implementations can include at least one or both of Universal

Serial Bus (USB) and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) 1394 interface technologies. Other external drive connection technologies are within contemplation of the embodiments described herein.

The drives and their associated computer-readable storage media provide nonvolatile storage of data, data structures, computer-executable instructions, and so forth. For the computer 2002, the drives and storage media accommodate the storage of any data in a suitable digital format. Although the description of computer-readable storage media above refers to respective types of storage devices, it should be appreciated by those skilled in the art that other types of storage media which are readable by a computer, whether presently existing or developed in the future, could also be used in the example operating environment, and further, that any such storage media can contain computer-executable instructions for performing the methods described herein.

A number of program modules can be stored in the drives and RAM 2012, including an operating system 2030, one or more application programs 2032, other program modules 2034 and program data 2036. All or portions of the operating system, applications, modules, and/or data can also be cached in the RAM 2012. The systems and methods described herein can be implemented utilizing various commercially available operating systems or combinations of operating systems.

Computer 2002 can optionally comprise emulation technologies. For example, a hypervisor (not shown) or other intermediary can emulate a hardware environment for operating system 2030, and the emulated hardware can optionally be different from the hardware illustrated in FIG. 20. In such an embodiment, operating system 2030 can comprise one virtual machine (VM) of multiple VMs hosted at computer 2002. Furthermore, operating system 2030 can provide runtime environments, such as the Java runtime environment or the .NET framework, for application programs 2032. Runtime environments are consistent execution environments that allow application programs 2032 to run on any operating system that includes the runtime environment. Similarly, operating system 2030 can support containers, and application programs 2032 can be in the form of containers, which are lightweight, standalone, executable packages of software that include, e.g., code, runtime, system tools, system libraries and settings for an application.

Further, computer 2002 can be enable with a security module, such as a trusted processing module (TPM). For instance with a TPM, boot components hash next in time boot components, and wait for a match of results to secured values, before loading a next boot component. This process can take place at any layer in the code execution stack of computer 2002, e.g., applied at the application execution level or at the operating system (OS) kernel level, thereby enabling security at any level of code execution.

A user can enter commands and information into the computer 2002 through one or more wired/wireless input devices, e.g., a keyboard 2038, a touch screen 2040, and a pointing device, such as a mouse 2042. Other input devices (not shown) can include a microphone, an infrared (IR) remote control, a radio frequency (RF) remote control, or other remote control, a joystick, a virtual reality controller and/or virtual reality headset, a game pad, a stylus pen, an image input device, e.g., camera(s), a gesture sensor input device, a vision movement sensor input device, an emotion or facial detection device, a biometric input device, e.g., fingerprint or iris scanner, or the like. These and other input devices are often connected to the processing unit 2004 through an input device interface 2044 that can be coupled



to the system bus **2008**, but can be connected by other interfaces, such as a parallel port, an IEEE 1394 serial port, a game port, a USB port, an IR interface, a BLUETOOTH® interface, etc.

A monitor **2044** or other type of display device can be also connected to the system bus **2008** via an interface, such as a video adapter **2046**. In addition to the monitor **2044**, a computer typically includes other peripheral output devices (not shown), such as speakers, printers, etc.

The computer **2002** can operate in a networked environment using logical connections via wired and/or wireless communications to one or more remote computers, such as a remote computer(s) **2048**. The remote computer(s) **2048** can be a workstation, a server computer, a router, a personal computer, portable computer, microprocessor-based entertainment appliance, a peer device or other common network node, and typically includes many or all of the elements described relative to the computer **2002**, although, for purposes of brevity, only a memory/storage device **2050** is illustrated. The logical connections depicted include wired/wireless connectivity to a local area network (LAN) **2052** and/or larger networks, e.g., a wide area network (WAN) **2054**. Such LAN and WAN networking environments are commonplace in offices and companies, and facilitate enterprise-wide computer networks, such as intranets, all of which can connect to a global communications network, e.g., the Internet.

When used in a LAN networking environment, the computer **2002** can be connected to the local network **2052** through a wired and/or wireless communication network interface or adapter **2056**. The adapter **2056** can facilitate wired or wireless communication to the LAN **2052**, which can also include a wireless access point (AP) disposed thereon for communicating with the adapter **2056** in a wireless mode.

When used in a WAN networking environment, the computer **2002** can include a modem **2058** or can be connected to a communications server on the WAN **2054** via other means for establishing communications over the WAN **2054**, such as by way of the Internet. The modem **2058**, which can be internal or external and a wired or wireless device, can be connected to the system bus **2008** via the input device interface **2042**. In a networked environment, program modules depicted relative to the computer **2002** or portions thereof, can be stored in the remote memory/storage device **2050**. It will be appreciated that the network connections shown are example and other means of establishing a communications link between the computers can be used.

When used in either a LAN or WAN networking environment, the computer **2002** can access cloud storage systems or other network-based storage systems in addition to, or in place of, external storage devices **2016** as described above. Generally, a connection between the computer **2002** and a cloud storage system can be established over a LAN **2052** or WAN **2054** e.g., by the adapter **2056** or modem **2058**, respectively. Upon connecting the computer **2002** to an associated cloud storage system, the external storage interface **2026** can, with the aid of the adapter **2056** and/or modem **2058**, manage storage provided by the cloud storage system as it would other types of external storage. For instance, the external storage interface **2026** can be configured to provide access to cloud storage sources as if those sources were physically connected to the computer **2002**.

The computer **2002** can be operable to communicate with any wireless devices or entities operatively disposed in wireless communication, e.g., a printer, scanner, desktop

and/or portable computer, portable data assistant, communications satellite, any piece of equipment or location associated with a wirelessly detectable tag (e.g., a kiosk, news stand, store shelf, etc.), and telephone. This can include Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) and BLUETOOTH® wireless technologies. Thus, the communication can be a predefined structure as with a conventional network or simply an ad hoc communication between at least two devices.

FIG. **21** is a schematic block diagram of a sample computing environment **2100** with which the disclosed subject matter can interact. The sample computing environment **2100** includes one or more client(s) **2102**. The client(s) **2102** can be hardware and/or software (e.g., threads, processes, computing devices). The sample computing environment **2100** also includes one or more server(s) **2104**. The server(s) **2104** can also be hardware and/or software (e.g., threads, processes, computing devices). The servers **2104** can house threads to perform transformations by employing one or more embodiments as described herein, for example. One possible communication between a client **2102** and servers **2104** can be in the form of a data packet adapted to be transmitted between two or more computer processes. The sample computing environment **2100** includes a communication framework **2106** that can be employed to facilitate communications between the client(s) **2102** and the server(s) **2104**. The client(s) **2102** are operably connected to one or more client data store(s) **2108** that can be employed to store information local to the client(s) **2102**. Similarly, the server(s) **2104** are operably connected to one or more server data store(s) **2110** that can be employed to store information local to the servers **2104**.

What has been described above includes examples of the subject innovation. It is, of course, not possible to describe every conceivable combination of components or methodologies for purposes of describing the disclosed subject matter, but one of ordinary skill in the art may recognize that many further combinations and permutations of the subject innovation are possible. Accordingly, the disclosed subject matter is intended to embrace all such alterations, modifications, and variations that fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

In particular and in regard to the various functions performed by the above described components, devices, circuits, systems and the like, the terms (including a reference to a “means”) used to describe such components are intended to correspond, unless otherwise indicated, to any component which performs the specified function of the described component (e.g., a functional equivalent), even though not structurally equivalent to the disclosed structure, which performs the function in the herein illustrated exemplary aspects of the disclosed subject matter. In this regard, it will also be recognized that the disclosed subject matter includes a system as well as a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts and/or events of the various methods of the disclosed subject matter.

In addition, while a particular feature of the disclosed subject matter may have been disclosed with respect to only one of several implementations, such feature may be combined with one or more other features of the other implementations as may be desired and advantageous for any given or particular application. Furthermore, to the extent that the terms “includes,” and “including” and variants thereof are used in either the detailed description or the claims, these terms are intended to be inclusive in a manner similar to the term “comprising.”



In this application, the word “exemplary” is used to mean serving as an example, instance, or illustration. Any aspect or design described herein as “exemplary” is not necessarily to be construed as preferred or advantageous over other aspects or designs. Rather, use of the word exemplary is intended to present concepts in a concrete fashion.

Various aspects or features described herein may be implemented as a method, apparatus, or article of manufacture using standard programming and/or engineering techniques. The term “article of manufacture” as used herein is intended to encompass a computer program accessible from any computer-readable device, carrier, or media. For example, computer readable media can include but are not limited to magnetic storage devices (e.g., hard disk, floppy disk, magnetic strips . . . ), optical disks [e.g., compact disk (CD), digital versatile disk (DVD) . . . ], smart cards, and flash memory devices (e.g., card, stick, key drive . . . ).

What is claimed is:

1. A system for developing industrial applications, comprising:

a memory that stores executable components and a library of automation objects representing respective industrial assets, the automation objects having respective programmatic attributes associated with the industrial assets; and

a processor, operatively coupled to the memory, that executes the executable components, the executable components comprising:

a user interface component configured to render integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces and to receive, via interaction with the IDE interfaces, design input that defines aspects of an industrial automation project, wherein a portion of the design input selects an automation object, from the library of automation objects, for inclusion in the industrial automation project as an instance of the automation object; and

a project generation component configured to generate system project data based on the design input, wherein

the instance of the automation object comprises, as the programmatic attributes, at least control programming that, in response to execution on an industrial controller, facilitates control of an industrial asset represented by the automation object, and data logging configuration parameters that, in response to deployment to a data collection system, configure the data collection system to collect data generated by the industrial asset,

the data logging configuration parameters comprise at least identities of data items generated by the industrial asset that are to be collected by the data collection system and a frequency at which the data items are to be collected by the data collection system, and

the system project data comprises at least an executable industrial control program that includes the control programming and the data logging configuration parameters.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the data logging configuration parameters further comprise at least one of a storage location at which the data collection system is to store the data items, an organization of the data items, or a condition that is to trigger collection of the data items.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the data logging configuration parameters are editable via interaction with a graphical representation of the instance of the automation object.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein

the automation object is a first automation object, and the system project data defines a hierarchical relationship between the instance of the first automation object and an instance of a second automation object.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the project generation component is further configured to set one or more data logging configuration parameters of the instance of the second automation object based on the hierarchical relationship and the data logging configuration parameters of the instance of the first automation object.

6. The system of claim 4, wherein the system project generation component is configured to define the hierarchical relationship based on a subset of the design input that specifies one or more linkages between inputs and outputs of the instance of the first automation object and the instance of the second automation object to yield an object hierarchy.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein

the project generation component is further configured to, in response to receipt of an instruction to encapsulate the object hierarchy, create a single encapsulated object representing the object hierarchy, and

the encapsulated object is scalable across the system project.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the instance of the automation object further comprises, as the programmatic attributes, at least device configuration parameter settings that define values of device configuration parameters for the industrial asset represented by the instance of the automation object.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the project generation component is configured to generate, based on the device configuration parameter settings associated with the instance of the automation object, device configuration data that, in response to deployment to the industrial asset, configures the industrial asset in accordance with the device configuration parameter settings.

10. The system of claim 8, wherein the device configuration parameter settings comprise at least one of a network address, a communication setting, an operating mode setting, a high or low operating limit, an operating parameter, a scale factor, a security settings, a power setting, or a safety setting.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the automation objects represent, as the industrial assets, at least one of an industrial process, a controller, a control program, a tag within the control program, a machine, a motor, a motor drive, a telemetry device, a tank, a valve, a pump, an industrial safety device, an industrial robot, or an actuator.

12. A method for developing industrial applications, comprising:

receiving, by a system comprising a processor via interaction with integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces rendered on a client device, design input that defines aspects of an industrial control and monitoring project, wherein the receiving comprises receiving at least a selection of an automation object, from a library of automation objects, for inclusion in the industrial control and monitoring project as an instance of the automation object, the automation objects representing respective industrial assets and having respective programmatic attributes relating to the industrial assets; and



41

generating, by the system, system project data based on the design input, wherein

the instance of the automation object comprises, as the programmatic attributes, at least control programming that, in response to execution on an industrial controller, facilitates control of an industrial asset represented by the automation object, and data logging configuration parameters that, in response to deployment to a data historian system, configure the data historian system to collect data generated by the industrial asset, the data logging configuration parameters comprise at least identities of data items generated by the industrial asset that are to be collected by the data historian system and a frequency at which the data items are to be collected by the data historian system, and the system project data comprises at least the data logging configuration parameters and an executable control program that includes the control programming.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the data logging configuration parameters further comprise at least one of a storage location at which the data historian system is to store the data items, an organization of the data items, or a condition that is to trigger collection of the data items.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the receiving of the design input further comprises receiving values of the data logging configuration parameters via interaction with a graphical representation of the instance of the automation object.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the automation object is a first automation object, the receiving of the design input further comprises receiving a definition of a hierarchical relationship between the instance of the first automation object and an instance of a second automation object, and the method further comprises, in response to the receiving of the definition of the hierarchical relationship, defining an object hierarchy comprising the instance of the first automation object, the instance of the second automation object, and the definition of the hierarchical relationship.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising setting, by the system, one or more data logging configuration parameters of the instance of the second automation object based on the hierarchical relationship and the data logging configuration parameters of the instance of the first automation object.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising, in response to receiving an instruction to encapsulate the object hierarchy, creating, by the system, a single encapsulated object representing the object hierarchy, wherein the encapsulated object is scalable across the industrial control and monitoring project.

42

18. The method of claim 12, wherein the receiving the design input comprises receiving device configuration parameter values directed to the instance of the automation object, the device configuration parameter values are values of device configuration parameters for the industrial asset represented by the instance of the automation object, and the method further comprises, in response to the receiving of the device configuration parameter values, setting, by the system, the device configuration parameter values as one or more of the programmatic attributes of the instance of the automation object.

19. A non-transitory computer-readable medium having stored thereon instructions that, in response to execution, cause a system comprising a processor to perform operations, the operations comprising:

receiving, from a client device via interaction with integrated development environment (IDE) interfaces, design input that defines control design aspects of an industrial automation project, wherein the receiving comprises receiving at least a selection of an automation object, from a library of automation objects, to be included in the industrial automation project as an instance of the automation object, and the automation objects represent respective industrial assets and having respective programmatic attributes relating to the industrial assets; and

generating system project data based on the design input, wherein

the instance of the automation object comprises, as the programmatic attributes, at least control programming that, in response to execution on an industrial control device, facilitates control of an industrial asset represented by the automation object, and data historian configuration settings that, in response to deployment to a data historian system, configure the data historian system to collect data generated by the industrial asset, the data historian configuration parameters comprise at least identities of data items generated by the industrial asset that are to be collected by the data historian system and a frequency at which the data items are to be collected by the data historian system, and the system project data comprises at least the data historian configuration parameters and an executable control program that includes the control programming.

20. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 19, wherein the data historian configuration parameters further comprise at least one of a storage location at which the data historian system is to store the data items, an organization of the data items, or a condition that is to trigger collection of the data items.

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